JANUARY 5, 1943 V.46, no 1 15c in Canada 20c

THE GREAT SOVIET TRAP

BY COLONEL T.

WHAT ABOUT OUR CHILDREN?

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY: HOW TO OVERCOME IT

BY R. W. WILLIAMSON

THE GREATEST SHIP AFLOAT

BY RICHARD O. BOYER

HELL IN HELSINKI

BY WILLIAM AUER

SIMONOV COMES TO BROADWAY

BY H. W. L. DANA

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

FOR YOUR ATTENTION

We recommend that you make certain you get next week's issue of NM. It will carry one of the most important discussions we have held in recent months: the theme is "What Shall We Do About Production?" Three representative Americans will present their viewpoints on this issue of transcendant importance for victory. They are Ernest Minor Patterson, professor of economics at the University of Pennsylvania; John Beecher, New York regional director of the President's Fair Employment Practice Committee; and James Lustig, organizer of District Four, United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers, CIO.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

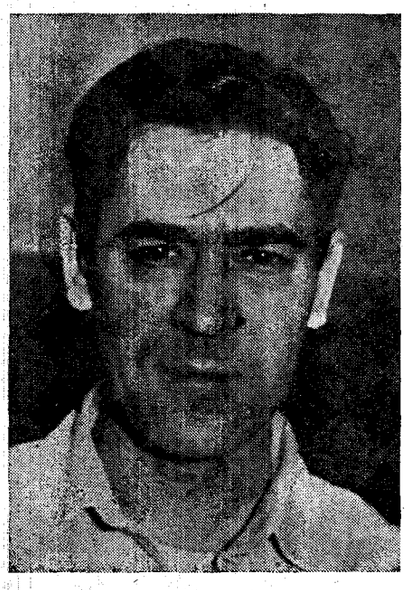
We have so many New Year's greetings we can't tell you about all of them; one of them, however, we'll publish because we know you will be as thrilled over it as we were. It's from Samuel Marshak, Soviet poet, and Stalin prize winner this year:

"Joseph North, editor, NEW MASSES: In Moscow, New York, London, Don steppes, Caucasian ranges, North Africa deserts, we are all meeting this new year with same hopes, same purposes. We are hoping that in 1943 immense spaces that divide our troops and those of our allies will shrink day by day. My heartfelt good wishes to you, your staff, and readers for happy new year—a year that will see the justification of all great efforts and sacrifices we have made."

BLACKIE MYERS

As vice-president of the National Maritime Union, Frederick ("Blackie") Myers is one of America's busiest men these days. When we called him the other day for some "biographical data" for this page, Blackie insisted that people nowadays don't care about what you did once upon a time; they want to know what you're doing now. And he stuck to his guns. So this is in the main a report on present activities of Blackie Myers and the union with which he has been so closely associated since its founding in 1937. The NMU men keep 'em sailing, despite hell and high water and Nazi torpedoes. Close to 50,000 strong, they man the boats that bring the goods to the distant ports of this global war. What these merchantmen want now is to be allowed to man the guns, thus increasing their own ability to hit back at the enemy and releasing US Navy sailors for service elsewhere.

We did manage to squeeze out of Blackie the information that he was born in Brooklyn, 1907, and that he has been going to sea ever since he was a kid in his first pair of long trousers. We're proud and happy to have this fighting representative of a fighting union as a contributing editor.



SCHOOL DAYS

With the opening of the winter term on January 11, the Workers School begins its twentieth year as an educational center for the study of social, economic, and political problems based on the principles of scientific socialism. Founded to meet the need for a new type of educational institution, a people's university, the Workers School is today rendering useful service to the nation's war effort by illuminating a variety of problems related to the struggle for national survival. NM's dramatic critic, Alvah Bessie, will give a course in "Literature and the World We Live In." Last semester Joseph North taught a course in practical writing.

The Writers School of the League of American Writers has been incorporated with the School for Democracy, and is now known as the Writers Section of the school. Three of NM's editors—Joy Davidman, Alfred Kreymborg, and Barbara Giles—are teachers in the school. Other noted teachers of the craft include Louis Lerman, Mary Elting, Jean Karsavina, and Helen Bergovoy. The school term opens January 4.

OUR READERS SAY

Here is a reaction we got to Rep. Elmer Holland's guest editorial in the Dec. 22 issue. The writer, a regular reader of NM, works at the Federal Shipbuilding Company, at Kearny, N. J. "Dear NM. To counteract the hideous line of the New York *Daily News*, which most men at the yard still read, please distribute a leaflet of Rep. Holland's 'guest editorial' on Russia. The whole thing could be reproduced easily by photo offset, including his picture and some typed material on NM and Holland's background, especially if he is an officially labor-backed representative. . . ."

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EDITOR: JOSEPH NORTH, ASSOCIATE EDITORS: FREDERICK V. FIELD BARBARA GILES, HERBERT GOLDFRANK, A. B. MAGIL, RUTH McKENNEY, JOHN STUART. WASHINGTON EDITOR: BRUCE MINTON. EDITORIAL ASSISTANT: MARJORIE DeARMAND. BUSINESS MANAGER: CARL BRISTEL.

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

LIONEL BERMAN
ALVAH BESSIE
RICHARD O. BOYER
JOY DAVIDMAN
BELLA V. DODD
R. PALME DUTT
RALPH ELLISON
WILLIAM GROPPER
ALFRED KREYMBORG
VITO MARCANTONIO
FREDERICK MYERS
SAMUEL PUTNAM
PAUL ROBESON
ISIDOR SCHNEIDER
HOWARD SELSAM
SAMUEL SILLEN
JOSEPH STAROBIN
MAX YERGAN
ART YOUNG

THIS WEEK

January 5, 19

NEW MASSES SPOTLIGHT

1943 The Editors 3
Editorial Comment 4
Time for Alarm Bruce Minton 8
The Great Soviet Trap Colonel T. 10
We Launch a Miracle D. L. 12
What the Yugoslavs Want Steven Dedier and Tony Minerich 13
Gropper's Cartoon 15
Hell in Helsinki William Auer 16
If This Be Reason . . . Richard O. Boyer 19
Why the Nazis Hated Boas Bernhard J. Stern 20
Look to Our Children R. W. Williamson 22

REVIEW AND COMMENT

Traditions: Big and Little Samuel Sillen 24
It Comes from Goebbels Morris U. Schappes 25

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Simonov: Soldiers' Poet 28
Little Margaret's Journey Joy Davidman 29
Chekhov Revival Alvah Bessie 30

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1943

THIS is the year in which we can finish Hitlerism, this hopeful new year of 1943. "We" means all of us—the people of America and of all the United Nations. There is no doubt that we have the power; the only doubt is whether we will know how to use it, and use it before the enemy recovers. We've got him against the ropes—and we've been hitting with only one hand, the Soviet front. Will we start punching with both hands and finish him off in this round, or will we give him the chance to stage a comeback?

Despite the horror that grips Europe, this can be a really happy new year. For we enter 1943 with our side having the advantage on all fronts. A year ago, also, we were presented with a big opportunity—and missed it. The Red Army then was in the midst of the great counter-offensive that drove the Nazis back from Moscow. But while Hitler, by his own admission, narrowly escaped catastrophe, America and Britain failed to open the second front that could have dealt him the knockout blow. This year the Red Army's drive is even more powerful than it was a year ago. And the Americans and British have taken the initiative by launching the African offensive which is securing the bridgehead for the leap into Europe. In the Far East, too, the situation is brighter than it was at the dawn of 1942. Then the Japanese were on the march and the disasters of Malaya, Singapore, Burma, Bataan, and Corregidor were in the making. Now Hitler's Far Eastern partner has been halted in the South Pacific and has suffered the major naval defeat of the Solomons. His hold on Burma, the gateway to China, is being threatened by a British-Indian invasion.

THE opportunities are greater than ever. This time we must not fail. The danger now is that we will permit the sharp sword we have seized to be blunted, that we will let confusing and divisive political influences divert us from the fullest and most rapid assault on the fascist beast. There are those, for example, who seem to believe we can manuever rather than fight our way to victory. They tend to think, therefore, not in terms of decisive military action against Hitler, but of Darlan deals which, in the name of expediency, have the effect of creating political obstacles to military action. The favorable turn in the military situation has, in fact, intensified such moods among those big business groups (fortunately a minority) whose will to all-out victory was never too strong. The prospect of the complete overthrow of Nazism and the establishment of truly democratic governments throughout Europe fills them with apprehension and makes them receptive to Darlan finagling and to proposals which look toward a negotiated peace with the fascist "opposition" to Hitler.

In certain circles there has appeared a disturbing tendency to exonerate quislingism. William Philip Simms of the Scripps-Howard press, commenting on the reported suicide of the puppet premier of Manchukuo, writes: "I believe the great majority of Chinese, *even among the quislings,* hate the Japanese. . . ." Then he goes on to tell a story of a conversation he had back in 1934 with one of these Chinese quislings; and it turns out, according to Simms, that the fellow was really serving his country in the best way possible. Well, one might dismiss Simms since he has always been partial to appeasement and quislings, whether in Asia or Europe (though it is doubtful whether he would have written so brazenly prior to the Darlan affair). But what shall we say when we find virtually the same sentiments in an editorial in the New York *Times?* "He [Darlan]," says the *Times* of December 26, "collaborated with Hitler; but he did so, like Petain, with a 'noose around his neck,' and it is conceivable that he thought he was buying time until an opportunity presented itself for him to turn against Hitler once more." This represents a new conception of patriotism and political morality. Nathan Hale who, "with a noose around his neck," preferred death to betraying his country, was just a naive fool and our schoolchildren ought really to revere Darlan's memory!

THIS conciliatory attitude toward quislingism is no isolated phenomenon. It is, in fact, reasonable to ask whether the much-warned-against Hitler "peace" offensive is not already here. Not in the form of "peace" proposals, which would be too transparent, but in the form of playing upon those moods and tendencies in American business and political circles (particularly in the State Department)) which serve to dissipate our gathering offensive energy in negotiations with and speculations about those whose fundamental allegiance is to the Axis. In this context the Pope's Christmas broadcast, which took a position of "neutrality" in a war for the future of mankind, which denounced "Marxian Socialism" (thereby agreeing with Hitler), but refrained from denouncing Nazism and fascism (thereby disagreeing with the United Nations and with millions of Catholics throughout the world) has the effect of intensifying such tendencies. And it must be said that the continued recognition of Finland and the acceptance at face value of Franco's "neutrality" assurances have the same effect. (Hitler himself in his September 30 speech referred to both the Finns and Spain as allies.)

All these confusions and ambiguities can swiftly be cleared away by one great act: the landing of American and British troops on the continent of Europe. There they will be joining a front that is already striking at Hitler, the front of the conquered peoples who in France, Norway, Holland, Belgium, Greece, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and especially in Yugoslavia are engaging a far greater number of Axis troops than are America and Britain as yet. In Congress and in the country the needs of the European offensive in terms of production and in terms of those domestic measures that strengthen our fight must be paramount. The labor movement and the patriotic men and women of all classes have a tremendous responsibility. This is the year—1943. If our country is to live, fascism must die. To our allies of Russia, Britain, China, and the other United Nations, and to the heroic peoples of the conquered countries, our New Year's pledge is: *death to fascism—victory and liberation in 1943!*

THE EDITORS.

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NM SPOTLIGHT

But Darlanism Lives

WE DO not yet know who assassinated Admiral Darlan, or for what reason. It may have been an act of Nazi terrorism. It may have been the desperate action of a French youth who saw in Darlan, the Hitler collaborationist, a true enemy of the war against fascism. We do not yet know and therefore speculation on this aspect of the event is futile.

But we do know that Darlan stood for everything against which the United Nations are pitted. He was a betrayer of his country and of his people, he was an anti-democratic reactionary, he was a fascist through and through. His opportunistic turnover after the successful invasion of the North African coast was utilized as a temporary military expedient. Little has been said as to why he was necessary even as a short-lived expediency. It was when Darlan assumed, apparently without challenge, political as well as military leadership over the French colonies that we began to ask questions. It was when we saw the color of those other Vichymen whom he supported in power, when we waited week after week for the release of the anti-fascist fighters interned in North Africa, while the anti-Semitic regulations and customs were scarcely relaxed—it was then that we became skeptical. Was this a new form of appeasement desired by certain forces still operating within the United Nations? Was the war going to be dragged out endlessly, at infinite and bloody cost, while Europe was saved for the Darlans, the Mikhailoviches, the Victor Emmanuels? Was Darlan the symbol of a negotiated peace to come with the Goerings, or the Hitler generals, or Hirohito?

DARLAN'S removal by assassination does not remove these doubts. They could have been removed only by his replacement, while still alive, with a government which truly represented the democratic forces of the French people. But that was not done and so the real crime of Darlan remains.

Nor can the doubts about the Darlan affair be wiped from our minds by the appointment of General Giraud as titular head of a French Imperial Council peopled by outstanding Vichy collaborators. In this council is General Nogues, who it is said will take over most of the administrative duties; he was the Vichy governor of French Morocco. The newspaper *PM* characterizes him thus: "An ardent Rightist, he put down strikes of mine workers and agricultural laborers with crack Senegalese troops." Another member of the Imperial Council is General Bergeret, who fought against the British in 1941. Another is Pierre Boisson, who directed the defense of Dakar against the British and Fighting French forces in 1940. Is this the kind of setup to rally all the people of France or to inspire confidence among the millions of anti-fascists in Europe waiting for a strong United Nations leadership?

Surely the time has come when democratic political *policies* must take the place of political makeshifts. There is nothing expedient in sowing the seeds of doubt merely for lack of a clearcut policy. For makeshift policy not only leads to confusion and suspicion; it also plays into the hands of those elements which still aspire to appeasement and negotiated peace.

Our Ally China

AT THIS time when United Nations' troops are beginning to take the offensive in the Burma approaches to China, everything possible must be done to remove any obstacles to the closest cooperation between Anglo-American forces on the one hand and Chinese forces on the other. We pointed out last week that Burma cannot be reconquered in the early future without genuine and complete cooperation on a basis

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of equality among the Allied commands concerned with that theater of war. The next weeks and months will, we hope, see a determined attempt to open a pathway through Burma over which a steady stream of war material can once again flow to the hard-pressed Chinese. For the speedy, successful accomplishment of this task and of the greater ones to follow, China must be brought more fully into the policy-making bodies which are charged with determining strategy and with executing decisions.

As things stand today the war machinery for the Pacific and Asiatic sectors remains primarily Anglo-American. The principal military directives flow from the Combined Chiefs of Staff, a British and American organization sitting in Washington. China and other members of the United Nations are not directly represented though they are from time to time consulted through their representatives in the American capital. In the operational breakdown of the Combined Chiefs of Staff into the various theaters of war in the Pacific, American generals and admirals predominate. Even on the Asiatic mainland, where Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek is nominally commander-in-chief of land operations, actual contact is said to be maintained primarily through his American subordinates.

UNDER the Combined Chiefs of Staff there exists a whole series of organizations charged with the distribution of war materials. These include the Munitions Assignment Board, the Combined Production and Resources Board, Combined Shipping Allocation Board, Combined Food Board, and Combined Raw Materials Board. These five agencies, too, are essentially British-American, with China and other members of the United Nations being called upon individually only when matters of specific concern to them arise and then merely on a consultative basis. The Pacific War Council is the only organization concerned with political and military strategy for Asia and the Pacific on which China is an equal member. And the function of this body is nothing more than advisory.

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that responsible Chinese leaders are disturbed. As the time for large scale action in the Far East approaches, it becomes urgent to bring China completely into a position of equality in all branches of the war machinery. A concrete suggestion to this effect has been made by T. V. Soong, China's Foreign Minister, who advocates the immediate formation of an Executive Council of the United Nations which would have executive and directive powers for the more effective prosecution of the war. Whether or not the solution lies in that particular suggestion, a move in that direction must be made quickly.

Cart Before Horse

GRENVILLE CLARK is a Wall Street lawyer. He is or was chairman of the Military Training Camp Association, a group which is very much of a rich man's club. Clark claims credit for having written the original draft of the selective service act. In that draft was a proposal to pay the men who are risking their lives for America a wage of five dollars a month.

All this is ancient history, of course. We recall it only because there suddenly burst into the pages of the *Times* last week, spilling over into the New York *Herald Tribune,* a "movement" in behalf of what is called a "national war service act." It is an act to draft labor. Its author is—Grenville Clark.

The problem of maximum mobilization and utilization of our national manpower is too serious to be entrusted for solution to a Wall Street lawyer, no matter how exemplary his patriotism, and to the devices of ballyhoo. Moreover, it is a problem which cannot be solved at all if we separate it from the production problem. The proposed Clark act puts the cart before the horse. The compulsory allocation of manpower makes sense only if it is part of a single comprehensive plan for the mobilization of all factors in our economy, a plan that must include labor in its administration.

The fact that Clark's proposed legislation declares that no worker shall be required to belong to a union as a condition of employment (thus upsetting the maintenance of membership contracts upheld by the War Labor Board) creates the suspicion that its purpose may be something other than the organization of our labor forces. Much more constructive, we feel, is the seven-point program which the CIO recently presented to Manpower Director Paul V. McNutt. It places emphasis not on compulsion from above, which would inevitably strengthen the power of the individual employer, but on voluntary, disciplined cooperation based on the inclusion of labor in the administration of the manpower program. And it points out the necessity of correlating the activities of the War Manpower Commission with those of the production and procurement agencies, and of eliminating discrimination against women, Negroes, and other groups.

Tune In

NEW MASSES goes on the air. Yes, it's really true—starting this Sunday noontime at 12:45 on radio station WQXR (1560 on the dial), our friends and readers in the greater New York area will hear the voice of New Masses on the air this Sunday and at the same time every Sunday for fifty-two weeks. Our program titled "Words Are Bullets . . ." will bring to the radio audience the insight on current history for which New Masses writers are distinguished. The program will bring to the listener the many sided aspects of the global war we are waging—the fighting front, the home front, the cultural front. We feel confident that the radio program will not only bring our message for victory to a new broad audience, but will also secure many new readers for the magazine itself. Please listen in, arrange listening parties with your friends, and let us have your comments.

Long Overdue

AS BOTH Secretary of Agriculture Wickard and Elmer Davis emphasized over the radio last week, food is a weapon, just as surely as steel. To ensure the proper use of this weapon, to avoid the disaster of waste, hoarding, and unequal privilege, a rationing program is imperative. The American consumer therefore welcomes the extension of the rationing principle to cover commercially processed vegetables, fruits, and soups. Rationing of these products will begin in February under the "point" system that has been successfully used in England. Despite shortages in specific items, due to the needs of our armed forces and our Allies, there will be sufficient food under the plan for maintaining a high standard of nutrition.

Actually, this step was long overdue. The authorities explain that the month's lag in its operation is due to the necessity of training OPA volunteers and preparing retailers and wholesalers for the change. But the lag might have been avoided by responding sooner to the need for rationing. It is a mistake, we feel, to wait until the last minute. Sooner or later every basic commodity will have to be rationed, and the government should approach the problem not in piecemeal fashion but in terms of an over-all plan which will put an end to hoarding as well as to price gouging. A centralized program covering every aspect of our economy will avoid periodic crises, uncertainty, and the

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need to mobilize a new corps of rationing volunteer workers for each new situation.

It was good to hear Secretary Wickard and Elmer Davis bringing their program directly to the people. The defeatist press is trying to play up "hardship and hunger." But the people are more than ready to make whatever sacrifices and adjustments are necessary to assure a United Nations victory.

Merchants of Death

THE Anaconda Wire and Cable Co. of Marion, Ind., thought it could get away with it. By ingenious faking it got around inspection requirements and delivered to the government, according to a federal grand jury indictment, defective wire and cable for combat use. Some of the stuff went to Russia; back came complaints. The Department of Justice investigated. Now five key employes, including Thor S. Johnson, general manager of all Anaconda mills, have been indicted and charged with conspiracy to defraud the United States on eight counts. If convicted, penalties are stiff: on the first charge, two years' imprisonment or a fine of $10,000, or both; on the other seven counts, ten years' imprisonment or a $10,000 fine, or both on each count.

Between the crime these men are charged with committing and sabotage by Nazi agents there is no real distinction. These are acts of treason and should be punished as such. Nor should the responsible officers of the company be allowed to pass the buck so blandly without a searching investigation.

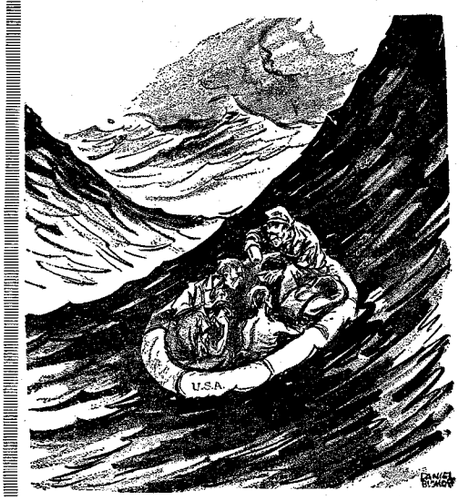
Anaconda Copper and Wire is a subsidiary of the powerful Anaconda Copper Mining Co. of Montana. It is good to see that our government is at last getting after the big fellows and not confining its prosecutions to the small fry. The Department of Justice is reported to be investigating about 900 cases of fraud in war work. In this fight for national survival there can be no tolerance of corrupt practices that imperil the lives of our soldiers and sailors or those of our allies. And there ought to be equal intolerance toward subtler types of sabotage which, while avoiding what can legally be called fraud, hamper production just as effectively. One wonders, for example, whether the presence of Charles A. Lindbergh at the Ford bomber plant has anything to do with the failure of the plant to turn out completed planes months after it was scheduled to get into production.

Footwear by Lyons

SOME ten years ago the United Press fired its Moscow correspondent for doing what newspapermen regard as particularly low: faking a story. The UP's former Moscow man—his name is Eugene Lyons—thereupon converted fakery into a profitable career and has been at it ever since. Lyons is one of those who have played Berlin's and Tokyo's game by lying about Russia. He has been, in fact, the guiding spirit of a gang of journalistic liars who helped undermine the defense of America by perpetrating what has proved to be the greatest and costliest hoax of the century. It was Lyons, for example, who "discovered" and first published the unspeakable Jan Valtin, whom the US Board of Immigration Appeals recently described as a Nazi agent.

IN THE January issue of the *American Mercury* Lyons joins the reactionary smear campaign against Vice-President Wallace. In an open letter to the Vice-President he argues that the recent Congress of American-Soviet Friendship, which was sponsored by people like Secretary of State Hull, Lord Halifax, Thomas W. Lamont, ex-Governor Lehman, William Green, Philip Murray, E. R. Stettinius, Jr., and a host of other distinguished Americans, was in reality a "Communist front." Earlier Lyons and his crowd had tried to pin the same label to Russian War Relief.

What pains Lyons most, he says, is Mr. Wallace's speech. That was the speech in which the Vice-President paid tribute to Soviet achievements not only in war, but in the forging of a new democracy, the "democracy of the common man"; and he linked together both the present and the future of the United States and the Soviet Union. No wonder Lyons is upset. For Mr. Wallace expressed the growing recognition among millions of Americans that our alliance with Russia is no accident, but is based on common interests and aspirations of enduring significance. And it is also no accident that in the same issue Lyons publishes as his lead article a contribution by a defeatist congressman, Melvin J. Maas, who has been trying to persuade the country to forget about Hitler and concentrate on the war in the Pacific.

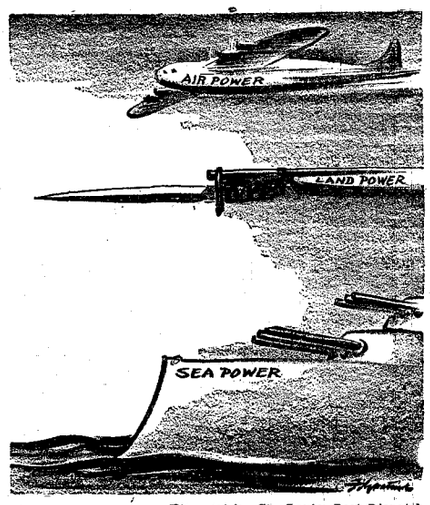


Daniel Bishop, St. Louis *Star-Times*

They Ration Too—Without Complaint

Laverne Wilson, Washington *New Dealer*

The Same Old Selfish Gag



Fitzpatrick, St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*

Air Power Alone Can't Do It

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LYONS' attitude toward collaboration with Russia belongs in the dog-bites-man category. But his stuff doesn't become any more appetizing when it is served again in Hearst's New York *Mirror* and in Arthur Krock's column in the New York *Times*. Some months ago President Roosevelt warned that our war effort "must not be impeded by a few bogus patriots who use the sacred freedom of the press to echo the sentiments of the propagandists in Tokyo and Berlin." He mentioned no names, but it is certain that one of those whom that particular shoe fits to perfection is Eugene Lyons. But since the *Times* wants to win the war, why should any of its writers emulate the Lyons footwear?

Blitzing Our Schools

HEARST is riding high again. While other papers were headlining the Soviet offensive last week, his New York *Journal-American* screamed in double-bold type that "Communist" teachers are responsible for "rowdyism" in the city schools. His educational authority: the oft-exposed Milo MacDonald, Bushwick High School principal who publishes an anti-Semitic, defeatist, Coughlin-line rag called the *Educational Signpost*. MacDonald, like Hearst, has amply demonstrated his devotion to victory before. Just last summer he threatened to sue the Board of Education for asking teachers to spend two weeks of the summer vacation in special war work.

But why this feverish attack on "Lenin and the Activities program"? What's behind those dense headlines?

1. Every time the Red Army advances, Hearst counters with a smear campaign. The prospect of victory provokes consternation in his breast. He is a perfect barometer of defeatist weather.

2. Hearst is trying to balk the rising demand for increased school budgets to overcome crowding in the classes and to provide after-school recreation facilities. The phony Red issue is the classical smoke-screen of the school haters. And Hearst is cashing in on the exaggerated press accounts of breakdown in discipline on the part of New York school children. His program is designed to intensify the conditions that have created difficulties in the schools: too few teachers, too few seats, too few child-guidance and child-welfare activities.

3. He is starting the 1943 campaign for new Coudert witch-hunts against liberal school teachers.

The technique is to create panic among parents. It is a technique that has worked before, in Germany among other places, and it would be criminal folly to laugh it off. Parents and educators must renew their efforts to get appropriations from pinch-penny legislators for building our school morale, not for destroying it.

Art Young

Still Trying to Cover the Case

Door-Key Kids

FOR the past many weeks the newspapers have talked a great deal—and often to very little purpose—about juvenile delinquency. What agreement there is on the subject has to do almost exclusively with the general cause of it. Obviously with the country at war there has been a dislocation of family life, as men move into the armed services and women take their places in industry. Result: "door-key kids" making the street their home, broken discipline, delinquency.

Of course it's not as simple as that. But far less simple is the remedy. And yet there are at hand some evident truths from which we can begin to build a solution. One is that when the family slacks off in its ability to provide for children's security and proper recreation, public agencies must come to the rescue. At present we do not have enough of such agencies, or those that do exist are not large enough. Worse, the trend in some cities is to cut them down. Councilman Stanley Isaacs of Manhattan has recently pointed to the situation which will arise when WPA is finally liquidated in New York (between February and July of 1943). For the WPA projects have to some extent taken up the slack in the city's short-sighted budgetary policy toward social services. WPA has maintained nursery schools, community center activities, afternoon and evening recreational facilities, citizenship and adult classes and school lunch programs. But what is going to happen when WPA is abolished?

As Mr. Isaacs says, there is no lack of volunteers to take over these services; but there is a lack of money. The federal government has recognized the problem of the children of working mothers, through the Lanham act, but Lanham act funds are still tied up in most communities, and are difficult to come by. School teachers, organized in the Teachers' Union, long ago offered to staff schools after three in the afternoon, so that "door-key children" might have a safe place to stay, and enjoy supervised play. The city itself, says Mr. Isaacs, enjoys a surplus in its operating expenses this year of over $4,500,000, with that surplus increasing by $700,000 a month as relief case-loads fall off.

Even at its best, however, WPA managed to staff no more than thirty nursery schools in New York, which cared for less than 2,000 children. The number of children needing pre-school care is growing enormously every day. The need to continue hot lunches (which WPA provided to 100,000 children daily) is urgent. The need to provide larger grants for children in foster homes, and generally to *expand*

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all social services, rather than contract them, is critical. More, it is an integral part of the very purposes for which this war is being fought.

Sidelights at Home

As THE old Congress departs there goes with it one of the most attractive figures in American public life, Sen. George W. Norris of Nebraska. In a legislative body in which opportunism is the usual passport to success, Senator Norris throughout forty years of service was distinguished by his integrity, his passion for justice, his closeness to the common man. He was, in fact, the last political representative of Populism, that insurgent agrarian movement which stirred the country in the eighties and nineties and left a permanent impression on our political life. Senator Norris shared many of the middle-class limitations of Populism, but also its crusading democratic spirit. And he is one of the few prominent Americans who had the courage to oppose the first world war because it was imperialist, yet the vision to support wholeheartedly the present world war because it is progressive and anti-imperialist.

MAYOR LAGUARDIA isn't bad at praising the Lord, but he seems to be passing the ammunition to the wrong people these days. His peculiar notions of how to win the war are threatening New York with a breakdown in its transit system. In regard to the 32,000 men who run the subways and buses he is reluctant to accept the fact that collective bargaining is here to stay. And so we find him acting as backstop for John J. Delaney, chairman of the Board of Transportation, who is chronically allergic to unionism. The Transport Workers Union (CIO) wants to negotiate about wages and working conditions. The mayor and Delaney think they can just shrug it off. The War Labor Board has rebuked them, and 212 unions and civic and political organizations have declared their support for the TWU.

THE would-be scuttlers of the Wage-Hour Act can be counted on to ignore the new Department of Labor report that the work week in industries largely engaged in war production was 45.7 hours in October. Secretary Perkins states that the average scheduled work week was forty-eight hours, but such factors as labor turnover and absenteeism cut down the hours actually worked. Some war industries averaged fifty or more hours.

CONGRATULATIONS to Lieut. Col. Elliott Roosevelt for winning the Distinguished Flying Cross for "heroism and extraordinary achievement" in North Africa. He is the second son of the President to be cited for bravery in action. The other was Major James Roosevelt of the US Marines. . . . And congratulations to Bernard M. Baruch, who has shown how wealth can be used for patriotic ends by donating $1,000,000 to Army and Navy relief, Russian, Chinese, and British war relief and other relief groups of the United Nations.

THE statement issued by the four-day conference of the American Institute of Judaism breathes the spirit of anti-fascism and international collaboration in the building of an enduring peace. We could have wished that it dealt more with the immediate problems of the war, but its progressive attitude toward labor and its sharp condemnation of all discrimination against Negroes certainly point to policies for the present as well as the future.

WATCH ON THE POTOMAC by BRUCE MINTON

TIME FOR ALARM

Washington.

"WE MUST all of us begin yelling like the very devil," he said. "It is time to spread the alarm."

He sat in the union office, tilted back in a chair, his hat pushed away from his forehead. The talk had inevitably come around to production. Everywhere, these days, the question of production is sure to arise, and no one I've heard has yet expressed satisfaction with the way things are going. The new "cut-backs" sanctioned by WPB now dramatize the failure of our country so far to throw all its immense power into the anti-Axis struggle. Certainly General Campbell's insistence on the need for continual readjustments in the production program to meet the strain of war can't be challenged. But the present overhauling of schedules to the extent of reducing tank output by over one-third—in fact, close to one-half—and the paring down by approximately thirty percent of ordnance goals (sub-machine guns, shells, anti-aircraft guns, etc.), is far out of line. General Campbell's apt phrase, "the fluidity of war," cannot be stretched to cover such sweeping downward revisions. The fact still remains that production falters.

The reason is obvious. To stress again and again the imperative need for over-all planning may sound repetitious—even dull—but until some sort of order is brought out of the present debilitating confusion, the home front has not been geared to victory and victory itself is at best pushed farther into the future, at worst seriously endangered.

The excuse for cut-backs is the supposed impossibility of producing aircraft in large quantities and at the same time turning out tanks, escort vessels, radios, small arms, shells, and other vital equipment. The supply of raw materials, so the argument goes, just won't stretch far enough. But always these arguments reduce themselves to the simple proposition that so far no concerted attempt has been made to adjust the nation's available capacity to demands on it.

FABRICATION facilities are a case in point. Recently, a pool of smaller manufacturers turning out armor plate—the Standard Spring Steel group, producing 15,000 tons of armor plate a month and able to increase this amount by another 10,000 tons—was cut off without orders so they could be placed instead with Carnegie-Illinois Steel at Gary, Ind. Adam Lapin of the *Daily Worker* pointed out that this shift not only threatened the smaller operators with ruin, but reduced capacity at a time when tank output was far behind schedule. The transfer of armor plate orders came as the result of the completion of new facilities at Gary. But the question arises, why were critical materials used to build a new armor plate department at Gary when this led to dislocation of production and financial disaster for the members of the pool? Particularly, why was this expansion of the US Steel subsidiary encouraged when slight improvements could have satisfactorily stepped up the pool's existing capacity? The answer is, of course, lack of planning, failure to coordinate.

This foolish procedure in respect to armor plate unfortunately can be matched by countless other instances. The largest companies have been permitted, usually at government expense, to construct new fa-

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cilities. All the time, however, ample capacity existed in profusion, though it was not being properly utilized. The Bethlehem Steel Co. went about enlarging its forging departments. But the capacity thus realized did not represent any required rounding out of Bethlehem's plant and was not necessary to the war effort. Rather the expansion represented an attempt to supplement the Bethlehem plant so that smaller competing firms could be eliminated as rivals now and in the future. When Bethlehem and other huge companies concentrate on expanding the manufacture of corrugated plate, which almost any small firm can readily produce, unjustified duplication follows without any strengthening of the nation's war potential.

Similarly manufacturers continue to neglect existing floor space and equipment while rushing ahead with the construction of bigger plants and more machinery. The strain on the machine tool industry has proved overwhelming: most of this strain has been needless, since it represents time and energy spent on the manufacture of machinery already at hand — *and idle.* Duplication of machine tools merely succeeds in eating up critical materials. When these tools are finally ready for use, materials to keep them busy are hard to get—already squandered in the construction of these machines. Capacity expanded in this way puts a further strain on manpower. Instead of building new machine tools, those already in existence could have been used or adapted with vast economy and with a resulting acceleration of production. Expansion of capacity is not primarily a matter of new tools and plants; it is largely a question of getting the maximum productivity per man hour out of equipment already available.

AGAIN, the supply of materials has proved a bottleneck, tightened by the mad prodigality of building unnecessary factories, by failure properly to gather in the scrap, by negligence in expanding production of raw materials at the source. A small manufacturer, visiting Washington in a desperate attempt to save his firm from folding up, remarked angrily over the dinner table: "A great deal of this raw material mess is nonsense. If this war is worth winning, we shouldn't be stopped by anything. There are 5,000,000 automobiles in this country. If the war effort demands nickel, copper, aluminum, chrome, steel, rubber—well, it seems to me this country would win the war a lot quicker if it took a million or so of these passenger cars now used only for pleasure driving and scrapped them and salvaged these materials. Why not? We have a war to win."

More effective than this rather drastic approach is the agitation to swell the supply of raw materials at the source. Recent negotiations of the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers at Butte, Mont., revealed that absenteeism and turnover of labor have cut into production. The union analyzed the situation, convinced the Anaconda Copper Co. that the poor record in the Butte area stemmed from the inadequacy of grievance machinery, that once legitimate complaints of workers were handled on the spot, absenteeism and labor turnover would become negligible. Where grievance machinery is efficient, where labor-management committees have been given real content, production has skyrocketed. The union cited results at the Pewabic zinc mine of the Peru Mining Co. in New Mexico, and at the Garfield Smelter of the American Smelting and Refining Co. in Utah. In both instances production has broken previous records. In each case the companies acknowledged that union-management committees, functioning efficiently and intelligently, made for the rapid rise.

Planning is imperative. It must be carried into factories and mines through enhanced collaboration between management and labor. It must prevail at the top: the need is for a coordinated approach such as that envisaged by the Tolan-Kilgore-Pepper Bill for an Office of War Mobilization. Planning must be encouraged by assuring labor participation in every phase of the production effort. Primarily, planning can be achieved only when the need is deeply recognized. The demand for planned production has not yet been heard in Washington strongly and persistently. As the critical year of 1942 draws to an end, the lack of orderly production looms as by far the weakest aspect of the war effort. To correct this weakness becomes the first order of business for 1943.

The labor movement has recognized and has begun to work in the direction of forcing over-all planning. The sooner the unions hold the national conference proposed by the CIO to consider production and what can be done to improve present-day methods, the better. The more conferences and discussions, the more forums and public meetings held in the communities to discuss specific local production problems, the sooner Washington will sit up and take notice. The administration remains sensitive to public opinion, to the pressure of the people. When the demand for planned production and for the full utilization of existing facilities grows into

"Do you have the third volume of Clausewitz?"

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a widespread clamor, when ways and means are brought forward to increase supplies of raw materials, the effect on Washington will be immediate and profound. Vice-Chairman Charles E. Wilson of the War Production Board, as I reported last week, has brought to WPB the conviction that desired production can be obtained only by rigorous and all-embracing planning. His energy and determination have proved a shot in the arm to the win-the-war groups in the war agencies. But production is not a one man job. The union representative was quite right when he insisted: "We must all begin yelling like the very devil."

FRONT LINES by COLONEL T.

THE GREAT SOVIET TRAP

IN THE trapezium formed by straight lines connecting Voronezh, Stalingrad, Mozdok and Novorossisk, an area equal to the combined areas of the States of Pennsylvania and New York, about 1,000,000 Axis troops are concentrated.

These are some of the best troops Hitler has at his command, because this trapezium is very important for the Germans. It represents, approximately, their net territorial gain in the campaign of 1942. This past year the southern wing of the German-Soviet Front was definitely "weighted." This was the only place where the Germans advanced. Look at your map: the city of Orel divides the front—its section south of Leningrad, to be exact—into two almost equal parts. During the summer campaign, since March of this year, the lines north of Orel hardly shifted at all. But south of it the front line swung like a huge pendulum attached to Orel, its lower extremity shifting eastward 350 miles to reach Stalingrad and stretching southward more than 200 miles to reach Maikop and Mozdok.

It is quite clear that here the Germans delivered their supreme effort after their maximum plan—the surrounding of Moscow by a huge pincers biting at Gorki—had been frustrated by the stone-wall stand of the Red Army at Voronezh in early July (as well as by the Timoshenko offensive near Kharkov in May and the defense of Sevastopol in June). The best Hitler could muster was packed into that great bulge, which blew up like a balloon, until by September 1 it had been stopped at Stalingrad, at the Terek at Mozdok, in the mountains of the Caucasus, in the hills covering Tuapse, and in the outskirts of Novorossisk.

Of course the Axis troops were not evenly distributed in this great bulge, say at the rate of ten men per square miles. The bulge has its "tumors." For instance, of the seventy-odd Axis divisions in the bulge some thirty were packed before Stalingrad, in an area of 2,500 square miles. So here we had the picture of a great balloon with "nipples," one of them (the greatest) before Stalingrad, another one at Mozdok and Nalchik, and still another one facing Tuapse. A nipple for each strategic objective—Volga, Groznyi and Baku oil and the Black Sea ports of Tuapse, Poti and Batum.

THE Soviet High Command, back in early July, had foreseen the formation of this bulge and had laid plans for its "deflation." The main element in this plan was the defense of Voronezh, as an anchor, or a *place d'armes* for the blow which was to fall almost five months later. (You may remember that I closed my article in New Masses of December 1 with the remark: "Something is stirring seemingly at Voronezh. . . .").

True to its fundamental strategy of hitting the enemy where his main force is concentrated—a lesson which many strategists ought to learn—the Soviet High Command struck on November 19 at the biggest "nipple," i.e., in front of Stalingrad. A powerful trident was stuck into the German armies of von Hoht, creating a pincers from Serafimovich and Abganerova and piercing the center of the enemy concentrations by a drive along the eastern bank of the Don Elbow, through the famous German Volga-Don "bolt" position.

The results of this three-week offensive are given in the table on the opposite page. At the end of that period the Germans struck a mighty counterblow against the southern arm of the pincers, from Kotelnikov. They used seven infantry divisions and several hundred tanks. A force, greater than the entire Axis force in all Africa, was thus used on a small sector of the Stalingrad front. Within ten days or so this counter-offensive, designed to relieve the remnants of the twenty-two German divisions entrapped before Stalingrad, was liquidated by the Red Army which resumed its advance here, too. (See results of this battle in table.)

On December 16 came the turn of the whole bulge. General Vatutin and General Golikov (who was in the United States some months ago on a special mission) struck from the area south of Voronezh and across the middle Don, respectively. One column pushed south along the railroad to Rostov, the other delivered a blow at an angle, pointing at Millerovo from the northeast and inexorably outflanking the fascist defenders of the railroad Voronezh-Rostov.

Several days after this offensive had started, the eastern Soviet column suddenly started fanning out southeastward and southward, clearing the entire area within the great *bend* of the Don (distinct from the area of the *elbow* of the Don which is east of the line Kletzkaya-Kalach) and cutting the Stalingrad-Likhaya railroad at Tatsinskaya, only 105 miles northeast of Rostov and fifty miles east of the vital junction of Likhaya. Thus a new pocket was formed along the section of the Surovikino-Tatsinskaya railroad, where a number of trains loaded with arms and equipment were captured; fifty new planes on flatcars were taken, while 300 were captured in the dispersal areas of the German airdromes in this sector.

While the eastern column (General Golikov's) was stabbing through the center of the Don Bend, the western column (General Vatutin's) was fanning out toward the Ukraine, with one spearhead pointing at the Valuiki-Rostov railroad and the other pointing in the direction of Voroshilovgrad only forty miles away. It must be understood that the paralysis of the Voroshilovgrad railroad center would knock out of commission approximately seventy-five percent of the railroad traffic to and from Rostov.

WHILE the first blow was falling in the area known as the Elbow of the Don, the Red Army launched an offensive in the Rzhev and Velikye Luki sectors. It is difficult with certainty to say that this was a diversion, but it would seem that this was the purpose of the operation. True to their principle of hitting at the enemy in the most vital sector, the Soviets struck

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at the vital triangle of Velikye-Luki-Nevel-Novosokolniki, knowing that the enemy was bound to fight for this railroad "navel" with utmost determination and could not afford to spare reserves from here for the Southern Front.

It would seem to this writer that the attack on Rzhev was designed to frustrate any attempt of the enemy to make a large scale diversion himself by striking from his advance position which is still threatening the Kalinin sector.

The results of all these complex and simultaneous operations are given in the table on this page.

The potential results are truly unfathomable, for if the Millerovo-Rostov corridor can be effectively sealed, 1,000,000 Axis troops with untold equipment will eventually be annihilated—or probably twenty-five percent of the active Axis forces fighting on the Soviet front and approximately the manpower equivalent of the forces confronting all the other Allies taken together. Which means Africa, Burma, New Guinea, Guadalcanal and all the fronts of China, i.e., 750,000 Japanese in China and 125,000 in the whole Southwest Pacific, including Burma; some 80,000 Axis forces in Africa, including Rommel's men.

OF COURSE to encircle and annihilate 1,000,000 men over a territory twice the size of Tunisia is no easy job. It takes time. A lot of time. Furthermore, it is quite obvious that the Germans will fight like hell to keep the corridor between Rostov and the Donetz open at all cost. The Donetz with its rugged western bank presents a good defense position. The defense of this position by the Germans would leave a seventy-mile wide corridor open between the confluence of the Donetz and Don and Rostov. This is where the big decisive battle will probably be fought.

So far the Soviet offensive has liberated more than 800 towns and villages and has disposed of a tremendous amount of fascist troops and materiel (see table). It has shown that German morale can crack under extremely heavy blows. But it has not reached the decisive stage yet and legitimate optimism should be tempered by realities. Such realities are: first, that the Red Army still carries the entire burden of the fight because of the indecisive fighting in Africa. General Anderson is marking time in Tunisia and General Montgomery tags along after Rommel who has outdistanced him and is achieving his purpose of moving whatever he has into Tunisia for the supreme defense of this vital "bridgehead." Second, it is an almost superhuman task to encircle 1,000,000 men and exterminate or capture them when their morale is not broken. Third, the Germans can still block the closing of the Rostov gap. And, finally, a sustained offensive in the dead of winter is an extremely difficult and utterly untried operation.

In order to achieve a truly strategic decision this winter, the Red Army must be relieved by a real Second Front. Judging by the way the African campaign has been going since November 8, the Second Front from Africa is all too slow in coming. Thus the necessity for a Second Front in Western Europe, i.e., in France, along the shortest lines of communications, has again come to the fore.

	MEN		TANKS		PLANES		GUNS		MACHINE GUNS		TRUCKS		RIFLES	
	Capt.	Dstrd.	Capt.	Dstrd.	Capt.	Dstrd.	Capt.	Dstrd.	Capt.	Dstrd.	Capt.	Dstrd.	Capt.	Dstrd.
Stalingrad Nov. 19 - Dec. 11	72,000	94,000	1,510	584	105	632	2,134	934	4,445	1,946	1,386	7,306	?	?
Rzhev-Velikye-Luki Nov. 25 - Dec. 11	2,100	75,000	416	194	?	200	550	541	1,063	1,230	920	860	?	?
Kotelnikov Dec. 12 - 24	?	9,000	?	300	?	268	?	160	?	?	?	?	?	?
Middle Don Dec. 15 - 26	56,000	about 60,000	178	172	351	117	1,926	268	3,700	?	over 7,500	?	64,000	?
Alagir-Nalchik Dec. 22 - 25	?	2,000	36	32	?	?	30	19	88	180	?	365	?	?
Total Enemy Losses in 36 Days	130,100+240,000 = 370,000 (estim. wounded 480,000)		2,140+1,282 = 3,422		456 + 1,217 = 1,673		4,640+1,922 = 6,562		8,296+3,356 = 11,652		9,800+8,531 = 18,331		64,000 captured only	
Enemy Losses During 46 Days Last Winter Nov. 16 - Dec. 31	140,000		2,200		?		2,200		?		14,000		?	

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WE LAUNCH A MIRACLE

A Kaiser shipbuilder tells how the "Robert E. Peary" was completed in four days and fifteen hours after the keel was laid. "The workmen thought it out."

WHEN the 10,500 ton Liberty freighter *Robert E. Peary* slid down the shipway at Kaiser's Richmond, Calif., shipyard four days, fifteen hours, and twenty-six minutes after the keel was laid, it was more than a miracle of modern industry. It was challenging proof that American industry in general has not even begun to tap America's greatest wealth: the initiative, resourcefulness, and inventiveness of American labor. Kaiser has been in the forefront in applying mass production methods to the shipyard industry—but it is labor's contribution that makes possible the maximum results from the "revolution" in building ships.

The *Peary* is the Richmond workmen's creation. The workmen thought it out, developed the practical details that made it possible, gave it the unstinted effort necessary to push it through.

Clay P. Bedford, general manager of the Richmond yards, said, "Our primary purpose has been the experimenting in new prefabrication. After receiving hundreds of valuable suggestions and time-saving inventions from our workers we decided to try them out on one hull and see what would happen. Our workmen told us: 'You order the parts and give us the tools and we'll do the job.' "

WHEN you realize that probably less than ten percent of the personnel have ever worked in a shipyard before the war, and probably less than forty percent in heavy metal industry, the record becomes all the more incredible.

Yet, despite the lack of previous experience, these workmen were able to offer suggestions which made a four and one-half day boat possible. It is a tribute to the fundamental inventiveness and industrial skill of the American worker. As a matter of fact, the shipbuilding methods used on the "speed boat," as it is known in the yard, constitute an almost entirely new industry.

Of course, there must be some debunking of the four and one-half day feature of the record. There was, in the *Peary*, a good deal of the publicity stunt, for Kaiser is a showman as well as an industrialist. Actually the "keel-laying" was a signal not to lay the keel but to begin to assemble previously fabricated sections of the vessel, the largest weighing 110 tons! A day before launching over 1,000 workers were busy on the hull, whereas the normal figure is somewhere around 250. Some of this is explained by the fact that most of the work ordinarily done at the "outfitting" dock after launching was done before the vessel was launched. Even so, there was a surplus.

The only realistic way to consider the *Peary's* record is from the standpoint of the number of man-hours required. The *Peary* was built with less man-hours than any other vessel, with six percent less man-hours than the average of ten previous vessels, and twenty-five percent less man-hours than the average of the first ten vessels built in the yard.

Forty-one percent of the ten hulls previous to the *Peary* were prefabricated, and fifty-nine percent built on the shipway. Sixty-one percent of the *Peary* was prefabricated and thirty-nine percent built on the shipway.

What were the suggestions made by the men? Infinite numbers of jigs to cut down the time of marking holes; cutting pipe, making bulkheads line up; a rig to cut two plates at the same time with the same burning machine to assure a perfect fit; a head for a union melt welding machine which welds two heavy transverse members to the tanktop at the same time; "dogs" or clips of various types which speed the aligning of sections to be welded, etc.

The crews on the *Peary* were volunteers. A group of women welders demanded to be included and threatened to quit if they weren't. Many men donated time because of a Maritime Commission ruling forbidding work on the seventh day. And even as they were setting their amazing record the workmen were observant and critical, already suggesting changes which could relegate this record to the ash-heap.

NOT that there isn't a negative side to the picture at Richmond. The inadequacy of the craft union setup in this type of production becomes apparent after the least observation. These ships are a full city block long. They stand about four stories high. They contain more plumbing and wiring than many hotels. They require 209,800 feet of welding and 23,095 rivets, over six miles of pipe and innumerable gallons of paint. Their engines generate 2,500 horsepower and their tanks contain 7,000 to 100,000 gallons. Their cargo holds are as big as auditoriums. Prefabrication methods which preassemble the ships in large units fully equipped with piping, wiring, insulation, cementing, joinery, and even desks and electric clocks, demand the closest coordination between workmen of all crafts. Yet narrow craft union jurisdictions not only split the supervision into small and confusing units but also block more effective methods in many instances.

The shipfitter measures up a unit and marks it where it is to be cut, a burner cuts it with a burning torch, a rigger lifts the unit into place on the hull, a flanger secures it with the aid of a "tack" welder, a bolter-up bolts it to the shell frames, a riveter rivets it, and a welder finishes the welding. Obviously these workers constitute one construction unit which should be under one supervision, and, more important, should continue to work as a unit building up the fine teamwork which makes for success in any production field. Yet carefully delimited and jealously guarded craft union jurisdictions place each member of this unit under separate supervision with separate responsibility. The gang is made up and broken up with each new job.

In light of this situation and in view of the urgent demands of the war effort the AFL would do well to reconsider its jurisdictions and align them realistically.

In the case of minority groups, especially Negroes, and in employment of women, the Kaiser yards and the unions in those yards are considerably more advanced in their willingness to utilize these badly needed workers, but much needs to be done. Some unions still bar Negroes and women from membership, or from membership on an active scale, or as journeymen.

MUCH that has been accomplished in Richmond is directly attributable to the progressive AFL Welders and Burners Local 681 of Oakland, though their jurisdiction over the Richmond yards was recently eliminated, not by a vote of the membership in Richmond, but by a dubious order of the International. This order was declared to be in the interest of "streamlining" the locals. Actually it was due to the fact that an enlarged and awakened membership voted out the old officers (despite intimidation and court injunction) and voted in a set of progressive leaders. Strangely enough the old officers turned up as the new officers of Richmond Local No. 315. However, 681's pioneer efforts in this field have left their mark, and more and more women and Negro welders, burners, shipfitters, and boilermakers are to be seen.

In contemplating the *Peary's* record one recalls rather incredulously the scorn with which the automobile industry greeted the Reuther-CIO plan and other ideas for labor-management planning. It would be heartbreaking to calculate the amount of guns, planes, and equipment undelivered to vital fronts because of management's blind refusal to incorporate the priceless assistance that labor would have provided if given the opportunity. It is not necessary to "enlist" labor. Labor's understanding of its role in the war and the urgent desire to hasten the defeat of fascism has already done that. The *Robert E. Peary* is a cogent demonstration of what that desire can do when given full opportunity to express itself.

D. L.

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WHAT THE YUGOSLAVS WANT

The people have formed a Constituent Assembly of the Liberation movement. A tremendous political step. Truth and falsehood. Eliminating the Fifth Column and representing all anti-Axis groups.

AMERICAN newspapers pride themselves on the thoroughness of their war coverage. Yet a few days ago a story broke which for drama and news value has had few rivals during the entire year. You probably have not heard about this story unless you read the New York *Daily Worker,* or one or two foreign language papers, or *Time* magazine. The latter, it can be said to its credit, did detect the enormous importance of the story and played it properly. But the dailies which are bought by the mass of newspaper readers did not give it a line.

A myth has a way of perpetuating itself even after fresh facts have blown it to smithereens. The myth, of course, is Mikhailovich of Yugoslavia. The newspapers, insisting on printing fables, cannot forego the myth for the truth. And the truth is the story of a remarkable meeting which took place in the old Bosnian town of Bihac on November 26 and 27. Picture for yourself an area just liberated from Axis troops by the Yugoslav Partisan Army. Fascist terror reigns on the borders of this area. Yet thousands of men and women broke through to attend the first nationwide Constituent Assembly of Yugoslavia's Liberation movement.

The Assembly chose an executive committee of ten with a chairman and three vice-chairmen of various nationalities. Dr. Ivan Rybar, the chairman, is a prominent political figure in Yugoslavia and has been a member of the Independent Democratic Party since 1920. Doctor Rybar and the executive committee expressed their objectives as follows: "The anti-fascist *Vece* [council] of People's Liberation of Yugoslavia, as the nationwide organization of the anti-fascist front of the peoples in the present great struggle, will do everything to help the high command and our heroic army to strengthen the unity of all forces, the unity of the front and the rear, to speed final victory of our peoples over the hated enemy—the occupationists—and the Chetnik and ustashi flunkeys." The Assembly took measures to deal with "all problems of public life" through people's committees in liberated and non-liberated territory. At the close of its deliberations it sent warm greetings to President Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, Joseph Stalin, the defenders of Stalingrad, and the commanders of the People's Liberation Army.

The Constituent Assembly is a tremendous political step in the Yugoslavian people's liberation struggle. It is a step whose repercussions will be felt throughout the whole of Europe. Among its aims is to consolidate all anti-fascist, national forces in the country and to extend the military gains of the past year and a half. It expresses the will to victory over the Axis forces.

IF MOST of the press ignored the actual story, at least one columnist did not. William P. Simms, appeaser commentator for the Scripps-Howard menage, promptly attacked the Assembly as Kremlin-inspired. He saw in it another attempt to discredit Mikhailovich, who has been warring against Yugoslavia's genuine guerrilla forces (see our article in NEW MASSES of December 22) with Italian arms and—it has been reported—with materiel supplied him under lend-lease.

This interpretation of the Constituent Assembly is, of course, nonsense from beginning to end. It happens to be the handiwork of a man who has a favorite general in addition to Mikhailovich—Baron Mannerheim of Finland. But it is completely contradicted by an interesting document known to the Yugoslav government-in-exile for the past several months. The document was first published in this country by the Serbian language paper *Slobodna Rec.* It consists of proposals made to Mikhailovich by the Partisan Army in October 1941, when Mikhailovich was not openly collaborating with the Axis. Two key proposals in the document were (1) that a joint operations staff be established and, (2) that democratic methods and institutions be established in liberated territory in order to mobilize all anti-fascist forces. This latter point was clearly defined in the sixth of the twelve proposals made by the supreme command of the Partisan Army. It reads as follows:

"The organization of provisional civil authority would feed the population, organize the economy, supply the means of warfare, and provide organs of public safety, etc. In our opinion, it would be an absolute mistake that in this liberation struggle, the authority should remain in the hands of the old *sreski nachelnici* (county chiefs of police), the old mayors, gendarmes, and so forth. In order to rally the whole people in the difficult struggle against the occupationists, it is necessary to create such public organs as will best answer the needs of the situation, be closest to the people, and take upon themselves all responsibility in the name of the people.

"The former police and county apparatus and community institutions are saturated with enemy elements and are even now in the service of the occupationists. Apart from this, the old institutions do not enjoy the trust of the people and are unsuitable to these critical days. We consider that the National Liberation Committees, which the people themselves are establishing, are at present the most suitable organs on which we can rely. *These National Liberation Committees should be elected voluntarily by the people themselves regardless of political beliefs. And where it is impossible to hold such elections for technical reasons, let these committees be nominated by representatives of all political groups who stand for the liberation of the country. We also consider it necessary to create a central national liberation committee for the whole liberated territory.*" (Our italics.)

These proposals were dictated by the ruthless necessities of war, particularly in Yugoslavia, at that time. They reveal unquestionably the Partisan Army's completely

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democratic conception of fighting the Axis. They show that the Partisan Army did attempt to work with Mikhailovich on a democratic basis, contrary to the belief held by many that the Partisan Army was opposed to Mikhailovich from the beginning. They prove the sincerity of the Partisans' desire to include all anti-fascist political groups and classes in a common front. They refute the lie of Mikhailovich apologists that he could not collaborate with the Partisans because they intended to "overthrow capitalism." The proposals are a final answer to Mr. Simms' "Communist plot" buffoonery.

MIKHAILOVICH'S response to the proposals was an outright rejection of the two key ones. He in turn demanded to be recognized unconditionally as the commander of all the Yugoslavs fighting the Axis. He demanded that the Partisan Army be dissolved at a time when it was the only means of resistance and when it was scoring brilliant successes against the Germans while Mikhailovich was waiting for more "opportune" moments.

Mikhailovich also insisted that the old civil institutions be maintained. But to have retained these local authorities would have spelled disaster. They stemmed from the pro-Axis appeasement regimes in Yugoslavia. They were corrupt, as anyone familiar with Yugoslav history can testify. For years the local police, city, town, and village executive bodies persecuted anti-fascists, particularly those who fought for a policy of collective security. For years the best sons and daughters of the Serbian, Croatian, and Slovenian peoples were murdered for opposition to Berlin and Rome. The majority of the local officials were Serbian chauvinists. To all non-Serb nationalities they were the symbols of national oppression. To the peasants they were the authorities who robbed them of their only cow in payment of taxes, who jailed them for speaking sympathetically of the Soviet Union. To workers these were the men who had murdered the heads of the trade unions.

These local authorities were even more deeply hated when the Germans and Italians occupied Yugoslavia in 1941. The invaders, as a matter of fact, did not replace too many of these authorities since they were willing to collaborate. In many towns the local police surrendered anti-fascist prisoners to the Gestapo. They have also issued proclamations calling upon the people to "recognize defeat and not fight the occupation troops."

Mikhailovich's policy made it possible for these local authorities to carry on as usual even after areas were recaptured from the invaders. And it became urgently clear that the whole resistance movement was seriously jeopardized by continuing such authorities in office.

The people's war of liberation demanded democratic methods for its successful prosecution; it demanded democratically chosen leaders who could enforce the rationing of the small supply of food and clothing.

THIS is the background of the Constituent Assembly and the National Liberation Committees of which it is comprised. Forged in the midst of war, the Assembly represents a dynamic, democratic body of the people. It augurs well for the successful prosecution of the war and for a democratic Yugoslav future. It is the answer to the Mikhailovich legend that the country is behind him. The Assembly should receive the unstinted support of the American government. That would be an invaluable reply to the Yugoslav darlanists operating in this country. It would also pave the way for material assistance to the heroic Partisan fighters who form the core of genuine anti-fascism in southern Europe.

STEVEN DEDIER.
TONY MINERICH.

TURMOIL IN SLOVAKIA

A NEW wave of unrest sweeps the puppet state of Slovakia. The big losses sustained by the Nazi army at the Eastern Front compel Hitler to find new supplies of manpower from his satellites. The Slovak quisling government, however, is afraid of the population's mounting hostility. The reenforcements sent to the Eastern Front are left in uncertainty as to their destination. All transports start at night, and in small groups. They join each other only beyond the Slovak-Polish border. The transports with Slovak soldiers are under constant Nazi guard. In every car there are also Slovak fascist (Hlinka) commissars, who have to keep watch over the soldiers.

As soon as the Slovak reenforcements reach the zone immediately behind the front, the men are divided into smaller groups and placed in German or Hungarian regiments. They get their ammunition only in the battle zone proper.

Despite the heavy guard, cases of desertion and mutiny are frequent. Underground reports from Slovakia tell the story of an incident which led to a mass desertion of Slovak soldiers. The commander of the Slovak army, quisling General Catlos, visited Slovak troops at the southeastern front and addressed the soldiers of the 17th regiment. After the speech he asked if there were any questions or complaints. One of the soldiers, Simas, stepped forward and asked why Slovak soldiers were treated worse than the Hungarians and Germans. He mentioned the smaller rations, the worse quarters, the bad mail service, and the contempt of German officers for Slovak soldiers. General Catlos became furious and had the man arrested. He screamed: "That is the talk of a Bolshevik!" Simas was shot three days later.

News of the execution was spread to Simas' home town by underground leaflets. Haystacks were burned and the walls of the Hlinka stormtrooper post covered with rebellious slogans. The authorities arrested many people, including women, but they were unable to find the organizers of the protest actions.

THE Slovak Goebbels, Minister of Propaganda Sano Mach, bitterly complained in a recent speech about the ever-increasing sabotage in the villages. "In many cases," Mach said, "students ordered to help the peasants at the harvest have conspired with them to hide considerable supplies of corn, wheat, potatoes, and other foodstuffs which should be delivered to the authorities."

In the towns of Bahon and Zohor dozens of peasants and even two government commissioners were arrested for not following decrees about the delivery of foodstuffs. Near Zohor a detail of the Nazi army suddenly disappeared. The bodies were found two weeks later in a place thirty miles distant from the village where they had been seen last. A manhunt started by the Gestapo along with Hlinka stormtroopers came to nothing. In the neighborhood of Malacky saboteurs put glass fragments and gravel into wheat bags. Flour was ruined and meat poisoned. A score of people were herded into concentration camps.

The activity of partisan groups which slowed down during harvest time increases again all throughout northern and eastern Slovakia. In September guerrillas attacked an army transport moving to the Eastern Front. The train was derailed not far from the town of Zhilina. The guerrillas tried to capture the supplies but the guard was too large. A fierce fight developed for more than four hours. Shots were fired. Finally the guerrillas withdrew after having succeeded in setting fire to one car with hand grenades.

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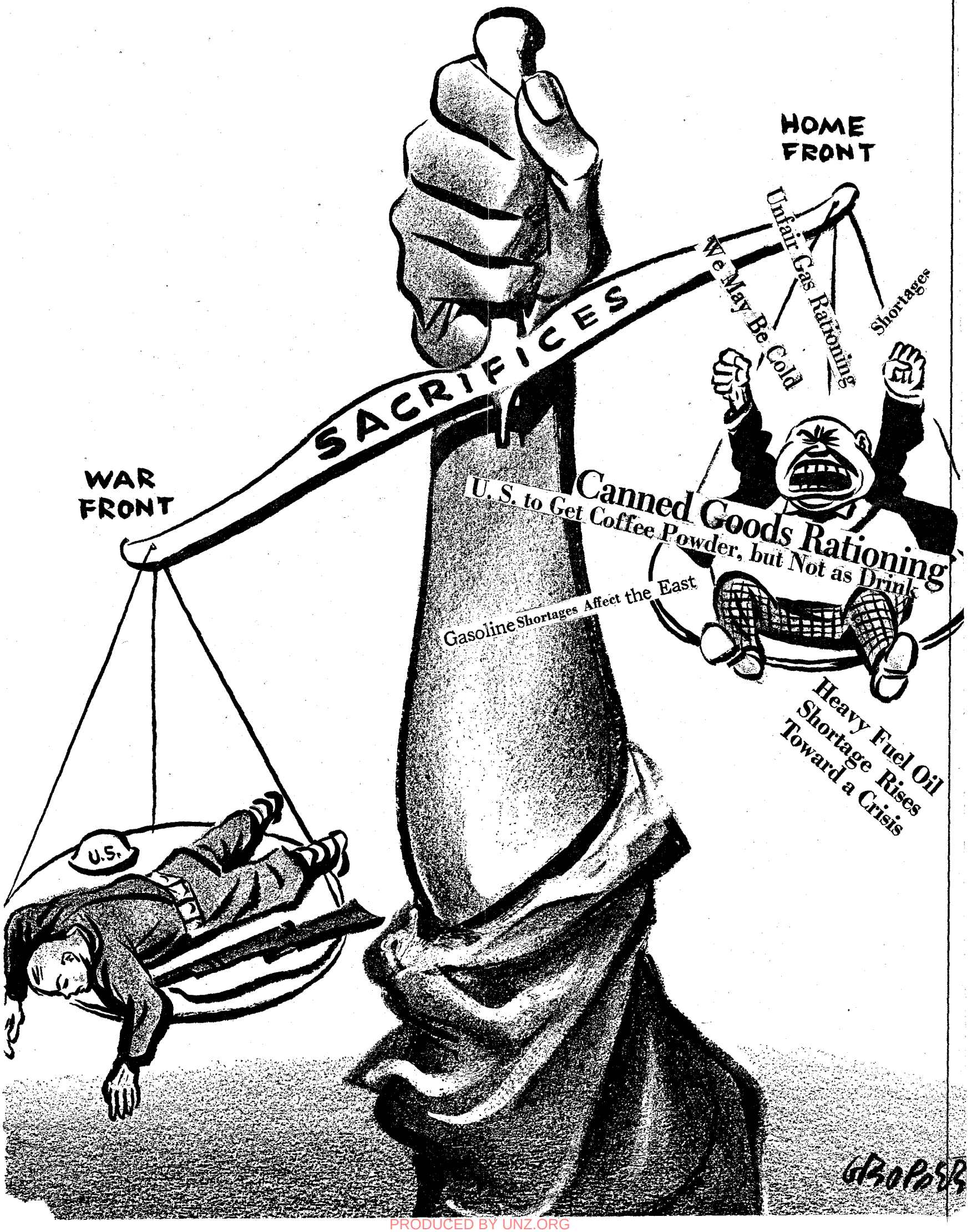

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HELL IN HELSINKI

The people's war-weariness imperils the Mannerheim-Hitler partnership. Of all leading Allied lands, America alone maintains relations with Finland. What a declaration of war would do.

IT IS of critical importance that our diplomatic policy keep pace with our military offensive. Invasion of the European continent will naturally crack the Axis with a finality which declarations and prounciamentos cannot achieve. But every political step which weakens the grip of fascist governments strengthens the resistance of peoples eager for the moment of liberation. An American declaration of war against Finland would pull the props from under the Mannerheim coterie which has been pointing to the presence of its embassy in Washington as an indication both of American support and sentiment.

To judge from the reports reaching this country the Finns are war-weary and would welcome an end to hostilities. And from the point of view of our obligations to our Soviet ally a forthright stand against Helsinki would be equal in value to many boat loads of lend-lease material. Fourteen Finnish divisions stand along the front from Murmansk to Leningrad, and of these, at least one has been fighting in the Stalingrad and Caucasus sectors. As long as they remain in the war they are a more formidable fighting force than the eleven miserable divisions of Italians and four of Rommel's Afrika Korps which faced the Allies in Egypt. A declaration of war on our part is therefore a matter of military necessity, of undoubted benefit to all the United Nations.

Of the leading Allied countries, America stands alone in maintaining relations with Helsinki. The attitude of Great Britain, at war with Mannerheim, was expressed most recently in a speech by Mr. Churchill in the Commons. "As for any of it [the German army] that is employed on this side, in all the conquered countries, that is more than made up for [on the Eastern Front] by the hordes of divisions provided by Finland, Rumania, Hungary, and other Nazi-ridden or fascist-ridden states." Mr. Churchill does not hesitate to call Helsinki fascist. And there is no doubt as to where a large body of American opinion stands in this respect. Payments of Finland's debts on time did not keep the recent convention of the CIO from describing her "as the enemy of all the United Nations." The AFL's *New Jersey Labor Herald* can see no reason why Finland "should be accorded any different treatment than Hungary, Rumania, or Bulgaria." The conservative New York *Herald Tribune* is so certain of the real state of affairs that it recently used its news columns to express the opinion that:

"Whatever Hjalmar V. Procope, the Finnish Minister, may say in Washington about Finland fighting Russia on its own, the Berlin radio used most of its transmitters last week to tell the world that Finnish Premier Johan W. Rangell had said in Parliament: 'Finland is standing shoulder to shoulder with Germany . . . Our country is allied to Germany with ties of comradeship in arms.' "

IN JULY 1941 the Finnish government issued its official "Blue-White Book," explaining its participation in the war on Germany's side. The main argument in the book is that Finland was a neutral until forced into the war by Soviet attacks. The fact is, however, that on June 18, four days before the invasion of the Soviet Union, the British government suspended a trade agreement with Finland and announced a blockade by the Royal Navy of the Finnish port of Petsamo because the Helsinki government "cannot be regarded as truly independent owing to the presence in that country of large numbers of German troops." (New York *Times,* June 19, 1941).

In his announcement that war against the Soviet Union had begun, Hitler stated that "united with their Finnish comrades the fighters of the victory of Narvik are standing in the Northern Arctic." Finland, in responding, endorsed Hitler's statement. In his broadcast of June 26, Risto Ryti, the president of Finland, said: ". . . we are not alone; great Germany under her leader of genius, Reichsfuehrer Hitler, has decided to wage war against the Soviet and other nations have joined her." A more unequivocal pronouncement of the Finnish government's attitude both toward Germany's foreign policy and toward its form of government, as embodied and vested in its leader, could hardly be asked for.

The Finnish Blue-White book devotes six pages to excerpts from Ryti's speech, but the passage above, appearing in all major American newspapers and radio news reports the day of the broadcast, was not included. It is obvious then that Helsinki has been a willing participant in the war on the side of the Axis from the very first. With this established, the presence of large numbers of Nazi troops in Finland for months prior to June 22, 1941, demonstrates joint German-Finnish preparations for the attack on Russia. Likewise, Helsinki's boast of being better armed at the outbreak of this war than in 1939 is traceable to the fact that Germany supplied Finland with arms captured from the French.

Simultaneously with its announcement of the publication of the Blue-White Book, the New York *Times* carried a report that completes the picture of Finnish participation in the war for the same purposes that motivate Germany. For on July 11, 1941, Baron Mannherheim announced bluntly that Finland's aim is the conquest of all Karelia, including the area which was part of the Soviet Union before the Soviet-Finnish war in 1939 and which, historically, had never been part of Finland. Had Mannerheim been successful in his objective, the short northern supply route to the USSR would have been closed except during the summer months when the port of Archangel is open. And had the Soviet Union not pushed the frontier westward after the winter war of 1939-40, it is probable that German and Finnish troops would not have been stopped short of the vital Murmansk railroad, as they have been.

In this connection it is interesting to note the official Soviet explanation of its attitude in 1939-40, as stated by the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs in its comment on the Finnish reply to the memoranda of the US government in November of last year:

"Under the circumstances of European war which developed in 1939, the USSR's policy toward Finland was naturally determined by considerations of security for the borders, vital centers, and communications of the USSR—most of all Leningrad and the Murmansk railway—and by awareness that aggressive enemies of the USSR, including certain rulers of Finland, were prepared to convert Finland into a *place d'armes* for an attack on the Soviet Union."

This Soviet statement acquires added force in the light of the generally accepted fact that the USSR had never moved beyond its own frontiers, despite numerous provocations on the part of Japan and other states, until the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939 compelled measures to be taken to safeguard its borders against attack. Sir Stafford Cripps is but one of many public figures who have stated it to be their opinion that Leningrad and, perhaps, Moscow, would have fallen had not the Soviet Union followed the policy that it did in 1939.

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The areas acquired or reoccupied from Bessarabia north to the Baltic, the Karelian Isthmus and the Rybachi Peninsula jutting into the Arctic, served as a cushion in which the first, overpowering blows of the Nazi blitzkrieg were absorbed.

The Soviet position is further fortified by the fact that Finland, which had long desired independence of the Russian empire but had seen movements to that end crushed by the czar, finally received its statehood on request from the Soviet government within two months of its establishment. And it is most interesting to note that Joseph Stalin, then Commissar of Nationalities under Lenin, won from the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets (in the session of January 4, 1918) the ratification of the recognition of Finland's independence, against the opposition of several who desired to retain the status quo.

DESPITE the participation of Finland in the attack on the Soviet Union, and the statement of aggressive intentions by Baron Mannerheim, Finland was given every opportunity to demonstrate any desire it might have to return to a status of neutrality with safeguards of its frontiers for which it claimed to be fighting. For on Aug. 19, 1941, Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles transmitted to the Finnish Minister, Procope, a message from the Soviet government:

"I told the Minister that I wished to inform him in the utmost confidence that this government had received information to the effect that should the government of Finland be so disposed, the Soviet government was prepared to negotiate a new treaty of peace with Finland which would involve the making of territorial concessions by the Soviet Union to Finland." (Department of State Bulletin, Nov. 29, 1941.)

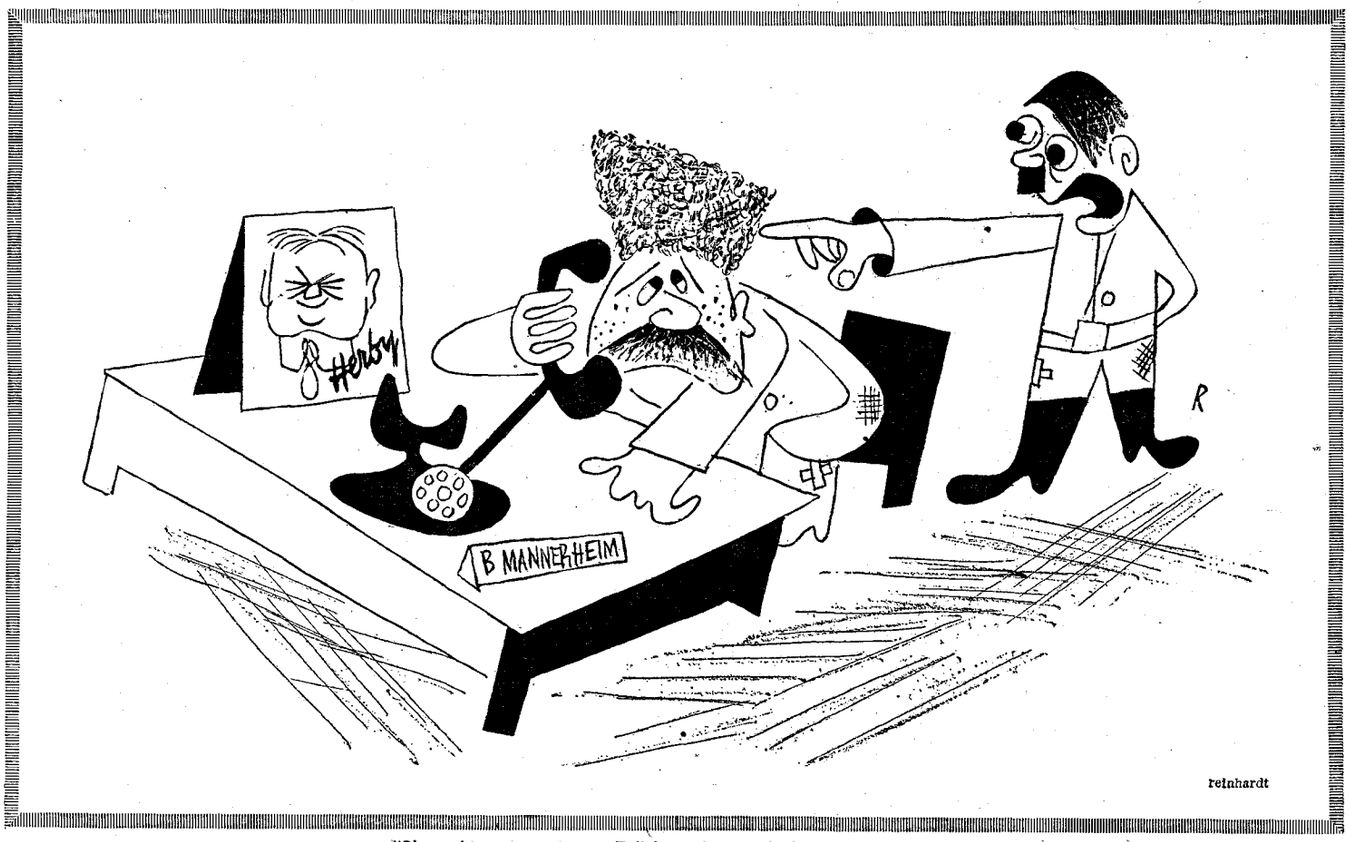
Finland refused this offer. As a result, on October 3, Secretary of State Cordell Hull informed the Finnish Minister that "the one question uppermost in the mind of my government with respect to Finland is whether Finland is going to be content to regain her lost territory and stop there, or whether she will undertake to go further, if she has not already done so, so that the logical effect of her course and action would be to project her into the general war between Germany and Russia and the other countries involved." (Department of State Bulletin, Nov. 29, 1941.)

Great Britain, already at that time vitally interested in keeping open the Arctic and Murmansk railway supply route over which its arms were beginning to move to the USSR, reacted even more unfavorably to Finland's attitude than did our government. Probably in response to a statement in a prominent Helsinki newspaper on September 22 that Finland had a "holy right" to more land than Finland had held prior to the Soviet-Finnish War of 1939, the British government formally warned that if Mannerheim's troops moved beyond the 1939 frontier, Finland would be regarded as "a belligerent enemy."

Finland rejected the British note as it had both communications from the United States. But evidently the people of Finland agreed with the Allied accusation that their country had become a German vassal state. For on Nov. 4, 1941, the British Broadcasting Co. reported that twenty-one persons had been arrested in Helsinki as a result of strong anti-German demonstrations held earlier in the week. "Another BBC broadcast said that Vaino Tanner, Finland's Socialist Minister of Trade, was asked at a stormy meeting of his party to quit the Finnish coalition government rather than accept any responsibility for continuance of the war on the side of Germany." (New York *Herald Tribune,* Nov. 6, 1941.) Perhaps the attitude of the Finnish people was indicated in its most striking form by a dispatch from the Stockholm correspondent of the New York *Times* on November 24:

"The discontent of the Finnish population in the face of a war that no longer looks defensive seems to have spread to the Finnish Army. From a source close to the Finnish General Staff the writer learned yesterday that about three weeks ago two Finnish battalions on the Salla front refused to fight. The troops said that, while they would fight for the defense of their country, they would not advance into Russian territory.

The Finnish government's reaction to these expressions of popular sentiment was worthy of the Nazi ally it had chosen.



"Phone him again, Baron. Tell him it's poor little Finland calling."

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Six members of Parliament who had favored improved relations with the USSR during the interval between the two wars and had headed an important popular movement for that purpose were arrested. Previously they had been expelled from the Social-Democratic Party on the proposal of Mr. Tanner, and the government had suppressed their newspaper, *Vapaa Sanu*. After three months in jail they were finally brought to trial.

The extent to which Finland had adopted the Gestapo's standards of justice is indicated by the indictment against one of these M.P.'s, Meltii, which consisted of the single fact that he had translated into Finnish the scholarly study of Beatrice and Sidney Webb, *Soviet Communism*.

WHILE these measures were being taken to crush internal opposition to the policy of Ryti and Mannerheim, military cooperation with Germany against the USSR continued. On November 25, Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War, issued a formal statement describing the disposition of Axis forces along the Finnish front:

". . . In the vicinity of Murmansk we find the German concentration of two German frontline divisions with one Finnish regiment. As we move south along the frontier, we encounter another German corps of three divisions showing a concentration of German troops in that northern area opposite the Murmansk supply line almost solidly German and designed very evidently with one purpose in view—to close the Murmansk-Moscow supply line against any reinforcements from the democracies.

". . . While in the Karelian Isthmus (to the north of Leningrad) these Finnish forces have not advanced beyond their old 1939 frontier, they are fighting east of Lake Ladoga, along the River Svir (to Lake Onega) as partners in the German scheme of opposing Russia in Russian territory.

"It is evident that the Finns are now being used by the Germans to further the German efforts to defeat the Russian forces in the Leningrad-Lake Onega theater."

Simultaneously, Maj. Gen. James H. Burns, deputy lend-lease administrator, commented:

". . . Their [the Finnish] military effort is designed more to aid Germany in its conquest of the main Russian forces than it is to preserve their own national integrity. . . ."

On the same day that these statements were made, the Finnish government declared its full adherence to Axis aims and policies by signing the Anti-Comintern Pact. This action called forth the following comment by Secretary of State Hull:

"The recent journey of the Finnish Foreign Minister to Berlin to join with Hitler's puppet governments over Europe in signing the 'Anti-Comintern Pact,' used by Hitler solely as an instrument to wage a war of conquest and domination against free peoples, is highly significant and cannot be camouflaged or explained away by propaganda attacks on nations engaged in defending themselves.

". . . every act of the Finnish government since the delivery of its note [rejecting the Soviet peace offer] has confirmed our apprehension that it is fully cooperating with the Hitler forces." (Department of State Bulletin, Nov. 29, 1941.)

Within a week after the issuance of this statement, Britain declared war on Finland.

SINCE Mr. Hull's statement of November 29 and the British declaration of war on the day before Pearl Harbor, Finland's activities have been exactly those that might be expected of an Axis satellite. Its propaganda campaign, if not directly conducted by Goebbels, is in the Goebbels manner. The New York *Times*, which has been and remains most lenient in its attitude toward Finland, was the first to accuse the Helsinki government of outright lying in its relations to the United States.

On November 13 last the *Times* wrote editorially:

"In the light of the actual situation two sentences from the Finnish statement [in reply to the Welles and Hull notes on the Soviet peace offer] are tragically ironical:

" 'The assumption has been made by the Government of the United States that Finland's freedom of action and even her independence has been imperiled by Germany. Finland herself has no reason to assume that she is in any such danger.'

"*One cannot believe that these words were accepted as true, even by the men who wrote them.* . . . If Hitler wins his Russian war he can and will absorb Finland, in any one of the ingenious ways known to Nazi practice, on any fine morning he chooses." [Italics mine—W. A.]

Finland has aped Germany in making life unbearable for its small number of Jews—1,400 all told. The Helsinki correspondent of the Swedish newspaper *Svenska Dagbladet* toured the camps for Soviet war prisoners in Finland last January. He describes the conditions he saw as follows:

"In one camp I visited nearly all the war prisoners were sick and looked very haggard. *Their clothes have been taken away* and they are left in rags with their feet wrapped in paper. Only a few have retained their boots. Pale, crouching and sick, they find it difficult to move about in the snow surrounding the low wooden barracks.

"The prisoners are kept practically without food and cases are known of men not receiving food for several days. One war prisoner, a Caucasian, went hungry for six days, after which he was admitted to the hospital. . . . The prisoners have no bed clothes."

A new statement of German-Finnish alliance was issued in connection with Hitler's visit to Mannerheim in Finland, supposedly to congratulate him on his birthday, and Mannerheim's acceptance of the highest German military honor. The US Office of Facts and Figures described Mannerheim's speech of acceptance as "obsequious," and quoted him as follows:

"I pray to be permitted to express my most respectful thanks for your extremely kind wishes.

"This gift will continuously remind me of the hard struggle of today, a struggle which we are permitted to wage side by side with the glorious and mighty German forces. I value it particularly highly that you, Herr Reich Chancellor, found it possible personally to make this journey."

IN VIEW of Mannerheim's remarks, Secretary Hull's comment on Hitler's visit to Finland came as a distinct shock. He merely indicated that the United States was watching closely to ascertain whether the Hitler visit would lead to a greater degree of Finnish cooperation against the United Nations. Evidently the State Department is still watching, although it has found it necessary to close the Finnish consulates for so-called technical reasons. What additional evidence the State Department wants before it takes the step of breaking relations with Helsinki is hard to fathom. Finland's Nazi rulers have said that they are collaborating with Berlin. Mussolini has said the same thing. Yet no one would hesitate to say that Mussolini is an enemy of the Allied coalition. Why the difference in attitude toward Mannerheim?

The matter of an immediate declaration of war against Finland is imperative. State Department pleasantries will never separate this vassal state from the Axis. So long as the State Department vacillates, Munich forces in this country are encouraged to use Finland as the avenue of a negotiated peace and for future intrigue against the USSR. The situation is pregnant with dangers to the unity of the United Nations. But a firm, clear policy, beginning with a declaration of war, thereby eliminating Mannerheim's last source of moral authority at home, can knock Finland out of the war in the near future. A war declaration would be the beginning of a policy that would convert Finland from a brake upon our hopes for early victory into a deep wedge driven at the very heart of the Axis.

WILLIAM AUER.

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THE WORLD'S GREATEST SHIP

The following was written before the "Booker T. Washington" docked at an East Coast port last week, from which she will sail shortly for points unknown.

SOMEWHERE, few know exactly where, the most important ship in the world slips through a deadly sea. She looks, of course, like any other freighter except she's newer than most, and larger, too—10,000 streamlined tons. Perhaps she's nearing Africa's shore where an ocean of incredible blue stretches serenely until it is rimmed by the perfect circle of the sky—a sky so summery and lovely that the menace beneath the waves sometimes seems a legend. Perhaps she's ploughing through the North Atlantic bound for Murmansk; her bow now skyward, now dipping deep into a giant furrow, part of a convoy that is but a smoky streak in the ocean's heaving immensity. If you hailed her from a distance you would not know she was the world's most important ship. Even if you boarded her, unless you were perceptive, you might not know it. Her importance does not come from her palpable cargo, important as that is. She bears guns and planes for sorely pressed fighting men and that alone, of course, *is* important. If she is torpedoed or lost at sea, or if she is merely slow, men will die for lack of what she brings them. But that could be said of a thousand ships and this one is the most important in the world.

Tribesmen of Africa have spoken of her. Patriots of India have mentioned her name. . . . Yes, she looks like any other ship as the ocean's ceaseless cadence moves her up and down against the far horizon—but there *is* something peculiar about her. Search her up and down and you cannot find her most important cargo. For she carries an ancient struggle, an ageless hope—that men shall not be penalized because of the color of their skin. That's why nameless men the world around are watching the *Booker T. Washington,* commanded by Capt. Hugh Mulzac, only American ship to be captained by a Negro, only American ship whose crew is equally composed of black men and white.

I LIKE to think of Captain Mulzac on the bridge in a uniform of the United States Merchant Marine. It took him twenty-four years to gain that bridge again. I met him first a few months ago in the offices of the National Negro Congress on Lenox Avenue in Harlem. He was fifty-six, I learned later, and he was wearing a black suit and he seemed too neat and prim for a sea captain. I had a curious feeling that as he spoke to me he somehow retreated, and yet it seemed a withdrawal that did not weaken but strengthened him. There were times, however, when his interest broke through that abstract, alert impersonality enveloping him, and then his features would gleam with a momentary warmth before returning to their customary grave repose. There was this warmth when he spoke of the old four-master in which he first went to sea some thirty-seven years ago and it was there again for an instant when he spoke of the sun on the sea at sunset in his native West Indies. There was this same quickening when he spoke of the far places of the earth, and there was a touch of pride as he savored such names as Madagascar and Mombassa and said "I have been there."

We sat before a table and he clicked open a black leather briefcase which was filled with documents. Using them as exhibits and proof, he told me in dry, matter-of-fact detail of how he had applied day in and day out for twenty-four years for a ship which he was licensed to command. He had commanded one, he said, during the last world war. He reached into his collection of documents and took from them a master's certificate issued after examination in 1917 by the United States government, which officially proclaimed him capable of commanding a ship anywhere. Without a word, and with hands as practiced as those of a trial lawyer in a complicated case, he reached into the mass of papers and extracted three diplomas. One was from the US Shipping Board, one was from the Swansea Nautical School in England, and a third was from the International Correspondence School here.

"I'm qualified," he said. "They need men desperately. They need captains. But they won't take me." He said this, too, matter-of-factly, as if he had told me the height of a mountain he had tried unsuccessfully to scale and at which he intended to have another try. He looked at me, poker-faced, for an instant and then, his features brightening, he said suddenly, "You know until I was eighteen I didn't know I was a Negro. You know in the West Indies we don't think much of color. It was on my first trip to the United States, my first long one really, and my mother made me promise to go to church. So when we docked at some North Carolina town on Sunday I swung right along to the church. I was very religious then. I was walking in and a man said 'Get out of here, nigger,' and I didn't know what he meant and he said 'Get out of here, you black bastard!' and that was the first time. I mean the first time about differences in color."

WITH a slight gesture as if asking pardon for his interruption of the business in hand, he began cataloging his rejections over twenty-four years. He began in 1919. There were fifty-eight turn-downs that year. He had somehow obtained a letter dated June 28, 1929, in which an official said that Captain Mulzac was qualified but that it was the policy of his company not to hire Negroes save as stewards. There were sixty-seven rejections in 1920 and that year Captain Mulzac shipped as a steward as he did off and on during his twenty-four-year fight. "You see," he said, "I have a wife and four children to support. My girl's at Hunter College." There were forty-four refusals in '21; thirty-six in '22 and I would have totaled them had we not been interrupted.

"This is Mr. Falkes," said Captain Mulzac. "He'll be my first mate when we sail." "When will it be, Captain?" asked Mr. Falkes, who was very large and very black. "Soon, I think," said the captain softly.

A handsome Negro entered the office. He was Cecil Blackman and we were introduced. "He'll be my wireless operator," the captain said. "You see," he said as if explaining a problem to one who found it difficult, "they're both licensed and qualified. I ran a school in navigation for these twenty-four years. At night. Here in Harlem. I have trained my own crew."

"You don't think you'll ever use it, do you?" I said and pointed to the letters. The captain was almost apologetic. His tone was soft. "Why yes," he said. "You see this is a people's war. Because it is, they'll have to take us sometime, somehow."

And as I left I felt sorry for him. For I looked back at the documents on the table. Each one mocked the captain's hopeful words, each one said "You are Negroes in a white man's world."

. . . Somewhere, few know exactly where, the most important ship in the world slips through a deadly sea. On its heaving deck strides First Mate Falkes and bent over the keys in the wireless room is Cecil Blackman. And on the bridge stands Capt. Hugh Mulzac and upon his shoulders rest the hopes of nameless men the world around.

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WHY THE NAZIS HATED BOAS

Bernhard Stern evaluates the life-work of the world-famous anthropologist. His trail-blazing work against racist supremacy. His championship of democracy.

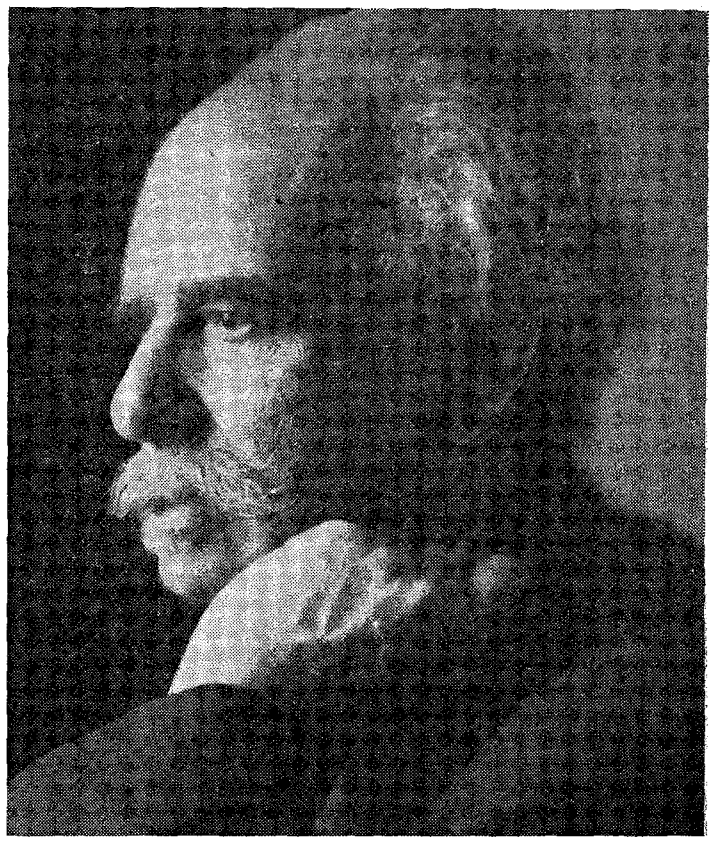
AMERICA has lost one of its most famous scientists—a humanitarian who stood as the embodiment of the idea of freedom for all mankind.

The name of Dr. Franz Boas is primarily associated with the refutation of the fallacies of racial superiority and inferiority. For decades the controversies surrounding the race question have taken their point of departure from his teachings. In learned books and periodicals, in journals of opinion, in his classrooms and in public forums he reiterated the simple truth: that differences in skin color and in other physical characters gave no warrant for discrimination and exploitation. He possessed no eloquence; his prose while lucid was too condensed to be popular. He was ever prone to understate rather than overstate his case. Yet the truths that he so carefully documented, and which he insistently propagated, have become powerful ammunition in the battle for democracy against fascism.

DR. BOAS' crusade against the assumption of innate race superiority by any group because of its temporary cultural dominance, and against the particularized version of that creed in the form of the Nordic myth, goes back to days long before the rise of Hitler in Germany. It was to a considerable extent a product of the American scene, of the battle over restrictive immigration laws. During that controversy Boas refuted with dispassionate arguments the widely dispersed propaganda of those who imputed inferiority to the recent southeastern immigrants and superiority to the "Nordic" immigrants of the earlier decades. His truths did not prevail with legislators. The racialist propagandists won the battle of politics with the support of the reactionary elements in American life, and the immigration quota laws were passed. But from that time forward, in all scientific circles, the arguments for Nordic superiority were recognized as spurious. It was then, also, that Dr. Boas' monograph on *Changes in the Bodily Form of the Descendants of Immigrants* laid the basis for new lines of thought on race classification by showing that racial types are instable with a changing environment.

It is little wonder that Boas' best known book, *The Mind of Primitive Man,* published in 1911, incurred the wrath of racialists everywhere. It took the props from under the imperialist credo of the "white man's burden." It exposed the rationalizations for white dominance in the South. It revealed as shallow the justifications that had been used to buttress discriminations against minority groups. It refuted racial determinism and showed the limitations of the very concept of race. It even argued, to the dismay of the more timid advocates of cultural opportunity for all peoples, that racial intermarriage appeared, from scientific evidence, to improve rather than to deteriorate the stock. So it occasioned little surprise, although much deserved indignation, that this and other of his works were destroyed by the Nazis at Kiel in the infamous book-burning spree of the spring of 1933. From that time forward Boas was no longer merely a noted scientist. He became a symbol among wider circles dedicated to the triumph of truth over falsehood, of science over ignorance, of democracy over fascism.

THAT his books were burned at Kiel was a savage irony. For it was the University of Kiel that had awarded him his Ph.D. degree in 1881, and had, only a few years prior to Hitler's ascent to power, granted him one of his many honorary degrees. His fame as the dean of American anthropologists, while serving as professor of anthropology at Columbia University, had been recognized the world over. He had been



Dr. Franz Boas

elected president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and of numerous other scientific societies. His contributions lay not only in the field of race. There is no branch of anthropological science that is not indebted to him. Studies in primitive social organization, cultural history, linguistics, folklore, archeology, primitive art, and social statistics, have all been enriched by his critical acumen. The vast majority of his contributions have been technical scientific monographs and ethnographic studies of primitive peoples that were read only by specialists. His *forte* lay in his devastating analysis of the unsubstantiated hypotheses and premature generalizations of other anthropologists. He repeatedly acknowledged to his students that his approach to data made it difficult for him to develop a system of anthropology. Yet there developed around "Papa Franz" what is popularly designated as "the Boas school," the members of which, while differing among themselves, received their initial impetus from him.

WHILE Boas was not a Marxist, his contributions in very many respects substantiate the theory of historical materialism. This is not the time or the place to trace the relationships, the parallelisms and differences in analysis and interpretation. An illustration will suffice to indicate how closely the views of Boas and the Marxists converge. In the course of his criticism of eugenists' fallacies, in his *Anthropology and Modern Life* published in 1928, he reveals a keen sensitivity to the effects of social inequality. "It is perfectly safe to say," he then wrote, "that no amount of eugenic selection will overcome those social conditions that have raised a poverty and diseased ridden proletariat—which will be reborn from even the best stock, so long as the social conditions persist that remorselessly push human beings into helpless and hopeless misery."

That he had faith in the common man—a faith that is the

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fundamental core of human greatness—is seen in another passage in the same book:

"I should always be inclined to accept, in regard to fundamental human problems, the judgment of the masses rather than the judgment of the intellectuals, which is much more certain to be warped by conscious control of traditional ideas. I do not mean to say that the judgment of the masses would be acceptable in regard to every problem of human life, because there are many which by their technical nature, are beyond their understanding; nor do I believe that the details of the right solution can always be found by the masses; but I feel strongly that the problem itself, as felt by them, and the ideal they want to see realized is a safer guide for our conduct than the ideal of the intellectual group that stand under the ban of an historical tradition that dulls their feeling for the needs of the day."

IT WAS this faith that made it possible for him to brush aside the importunities of some of his friends of many years' standing who sought to persuade him to join them in their Red-baiting against the Soviet Union and against the Communists in this country. Never for a moment did he permit the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom, which he organized in 1938, to be used for that purpose. The Committee was assailed by the Dies and Coudert committees, but he stood his ground courageously. In fact, when these forces initiated their shameful conspiracy to destroy the College Teachers Union he joined the union in protest.

Dr. Boas was throughout his life zealously devoted to academic freedom. At an anti-Nazi meeting in Carnegie Hall in 1938 he declared: "For us to believe in intellectual freedom restrictions of the right to express our opinions freely seem intolerable. This right is the foundation of all cultural progress. To deny it means cultural decay. We demand it, for it is the foundation of a free government. We must cherish it not only in public life, but particularly in the school, for we wish to educate free citizens." It is to his everlasting honor that these were not mere words to him, but he was prepared to defend his sentiments by giving his leadership and energy to organizations dedicated to their defense and realization. His recognition that intellectual freedom was webbed with human freedom led him to support the loyalists in Spain, to sponsor aid for refugees, and seek freedom for the oppressed wherever they might be found.

Boas will live in the annals of American science not merely because of his eminence as a scientist, but because as a man of action he lent the prestige of his great name in the defense of the democracy and in support of the onward march of the common man of all races and peoples.

BERNHARD J. STERN.

Bernhard J. Stern, who studied under Professor Boas, is Lecturer in Anthropology at the New School for Social Research and in Sociology at Columbia University. He is co-editor of "When Peoples Meet: A Study in Race and Culture Contacts" and an editor of the magazine "Science and Society."

Underground

IN WASHINGTON a Hapsburg archduke, Otto, pretender to a non-existent throne, poses as a democrat and gets favors in high circles. But in Europe another Hapsburg archduke, Albrecht, is winning a different kind of glory. Archduke Albrecht is an officer of the Hungarian army and is stationed in that part of Yugoslavia which Hungary seized after the Axis conquest of Yugoslavia in 1941. Albrecht is the organizer and leader of a special detachment of picked men—all members of the "Awakening Hungarians," the fascist organization founded by Tibor von Eckhart, fascist adventurer who is now in the United States. The special task of this detachment is the searching of Serbian villages in the occupied Voivodina region. Search means looting, rape, and murder. In six months of "special activities" the troops of the Hapsburg archduke have burned more than fifty villages, slaughtered about 7,000 men and women, stolen cattle and foodstuffs, put into concentration camps 18,000 persons, raped an unknown number of Serbian girls and women.

The tortured population of the Voivodina region organized resistance and vengeance. Guerrilla units raided the store houses of the Hungarian occupation troops in several towns. Near Zemun a patrol of the special detachment of Archduke Albrecht von Hapsburg was ambushed by Yugoslav guerrillas. Ten soldiers and a lieutenant were killed, the rest fled. Archduke Albrecht raged and ordered a punitive expedition which ravaged half a dozen villages without catching a single member of a guerrilla unit. A number of old people, including several women, were publicly hanged on Albrecht's orders. The local population was forbidden to bury these victims. Their bodies dangled for two weeks from the gallows "in order to set a deterrent example." Twenty girls were sent to one of the Hungarians' military brothels. Archduke Albrecht copied the practice of the Nazis in Slovenia where several thousand Slovene peasant girls were branded *freie militar Maedche* and sent to German army brothels in Poland and France.

THE following month the special train of the archduke, heavily guarded, was bombed when it had to stop near Novi Sad because a peasant cart blocked the railroad track. The archduke escaped unharmed, but his adjutant, Captain Eszsterhazy-Khuen, was severely wounded and died a few days later in a Budapest hospital. A few days after the bombing of his train, the silos on the estate of the archduke near Goedoello were set on fire. The Hungarian secret police were unable to learn the identity of the perpetrators. The archduke has since retired from his activities in Voivodina. He is reported to be on sick leave, with "overstrained nerves."

The news of the bombing of Albrecht's train and of the fire on his estate spread not only throughout the occupied Yugoslav territory, but also throughout Hungary. Alarmed, the Hungarian government papers charged that "criminal collaboration" existed between Yugoslav insurgents and "dark elements inside Hungary," and that this collaboration was fostered by "enemy agents from London, Moscow, and Washington." The most terrifying thing, according to Hungarian fascist papers, was the discovery that Hungarian peasants were in the ranks of Yugoslav guerrilla units in Voivodina. "These Hungarians, of course, have lost their Hungardom by associating themselves with the national enemy." The Hungarian underground radio, "Station Kossuth," is of the opposite opinion; it calls the Hungarian guerrillas the truest sons of the nation, those "who avenge the barbarian crimes of the fascist clique that still rules the country."

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LOOK TO OUR CHILDREN

Delinquency has risen more than thirty-five percent in some localities. "Who today is worrying over this situation?" Inadequacy of present methods. Outlines for solution.

MANY fine words have been spoken in the past about our children being our greatest wealth. Many fine words are being spoken now. But progress toward insuring the welfare of America's youngsters—at least for the duration—is incredibly slow.

The child welfare problem of first importance to the war effort is that of providing proper care for working mothers' children up to fourteen years of age. If this is not done, a large number of women cannot enter industry and absenteeism of mothers from jobs, already as high as fifteen percent per day in some places, can only increase. Like the British, we will end by having women pour out of industry instead of pouring into it.

Next in importance today, but of equal importance for the future, is the provision of nurseries for many young children whose mothers are over-burdened at home, and of properly supervised after-school programs for *all* children up to fourteen.

Delinquency figures depend entirely on how many children the police choose to pick up. They are merely an indication—but a good indication—of the general condition of all children. All adults are somewhat upset by the war. Many children are equally so. Delinquency has risen as much as thirty-five percent over last year's rate in some places. Judging by the British, we might expect to double that rise in the second year of war. It will not only be the children of working mothers who run wild if they aren't provided with satisfying and useful occupations

in these nervous days. Trouble will spread like an epidemic through the youth of the nation.

Who today is worrying over this situation? Who is taking action to find a solution? Who is really beginning to *solve* the problem?

Let us start from the bottom up—since there is far more action at the bottom than at the top. Success will not be achieved until the top acts, but events show clearly that there will be no over-all, efficient, and effective action from government circles until they are forced by public pressure to face the issue squarely.

Many localities now have official child care committees, appointed by the local War Council. In isolated instances, notably that of New Haven, Conn., these committees have gone ahead to examine the child care problem, the present facilities, lay plans, obtain local or federal money, and start programs.

More often the official committee is appointed but takes little or no action until pressure is brought to bear by citizens' child care committees. Seattle, Washington, is a fine example of this. There the Joint AFL-CIO Auxiliary Council was instrumental in obtaining a few WPA nurseries for the Boeing Trailer Camps—and, through this action, in persuading the official child care committee to set up a central information desk where mothers could come for advice and help. Later the Auxiliaries formed the trailer-camp mothers into a "Mothers for Victory Club." The Board of Education became active on the problem. First expenditures for child care were from Board of Education budgets, underwritten by the community fund and also by the war council. The Official Committee, at first a small and unrepresentative group—with no representation at all from labor—was gradually enlarged to include practically everybody (twenty-six members from all kinds of groups).

THE pattern followed by Seattle appears to be the normal one. Citizens' child-care groups spring up almost of themselves. They are usually sponsored by professionals in Education, Health and Welfare, but the membership is composed of the women who actually are in dire need of child care at the moment or who want sincerely to enter war industry and are prevented by lack of provision for their children. The objective of all the groups is to get proper programs at once.

Their demands for programs are tossed aside at first with any or all of the following remarks: (1) There is no need for a child care program. (2) Woman's place is in the home. (3) Use some system of foster homes or block mothers. (4) Use volunteers to man centers. (5) An over-all program is too expensive. (6) Let industry set up the child care centers.

But the answers come out louder and louder as mothers become more and more frustrated: (1) We are needed in war work. Without us the production program cannot succeed. How can we work without child care programs? (2) We cannot take our places in industry and at the same time remain at home. Moreover our older children are in need of more supervision than we can give right now. (3) The British tried block mothers and foster homes and neither worked. There are not enough foster homes available right now to care for the children of broken homes. (4) Volunteers are fine as assistants but no plan will work unless paid, trained people have the key jobs. We are learning rapidly through our own committee sponsors what kind of child care programs have

worked in the past. We want professionals to look after our children. (5) Yes, proper programs will cost some money. Are public officials, our representatives, unprepared to spend money to preserve the mental and physical health, to insure the proper education of the children for whom we are really fighting? (6) It is not the business of industry to set up centers. If employers are willing to contribute directly to programs, fine. Let them contribute to an over-all community program. Child care centers in factories are wholly impractical. It is difficult enough to transport workers without considering transporting children too. Centers must be in neighborhoods, if possible in schools. We have confidence in the public school system. Let them take over. Give them the money—HURRY UP!

In a few places the uproar is heard. The voices of a few employers, who are really ready and willing to employ women, join with the rest. Something, at least, starts. In other places nothing has yet been accomplished by local pressure. And in still others, no pressure group has yet been formed.

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The clamor is beginning to reach a state level. For example, in California, Sen. Robert W. Kenny, newly elected attorney general, conducted hearings in Los Angeles and San Diego at which representatives of local groups joined with professionals, trade unionists, and employers to testify to the need for child care. In New Jersey the head of the official state child care committee made the statement that without such local pressure groups, she didn't know how money could be obtained for programs—such was the official inertia at a local level.

LAST year a citizens' committee in New York City conducted a campaign to pass a bill providing state aid for child care programs. The bill was not passed. Sufficient pressure was not exerted by other New York state groups or from within the state government. This year, another bill will go up —with many more people behind it. Should the bill pass, it will provide a precedent for similar action in other states.

On the federal level, the past year was a bad one as far as child care programs were concerned. An inter-departmental fight was conducted as to who would get the money to dole out—supposing a child care program were really necessary and some federal money obtained.

In June 1942 McNutt's Office of Defense Health and Welfare finally appointed a coordinator (or referee) for some ten government departments with programs touching children. The net results were that the ODHW got $400,000 from the President's special fund, to be used for technical advisory positions in states or localities needing help in working out child care programs. Some of this money was finally allocated in December.

Meanwhile the Federal Works Agency obtained the privilege of allocating funds for child care under the Lanham act. There is said at the moment to be some $125,000,000 available for the purpose under this act.

Applications for the funds are extremely difficult for localities to make out and have to go through a half dozen checkings on the part of state and federal departments before the FWA can finally make a decision. The money is given under a system of deficit financing and the manner in which the federal authorities do their auditing has never been clearly stated. There is confusion and reluctance on the part of local governments to apply for this money even though it is sorely needed.

To climax a year of pressure on the part of a large number of individuals and organizations, the President discontinued the WPA and down went the only public nationwide nursery school and school lunch program. It has been said that FWA will in some way take over this part of the WPA program—but factual information is lacking on exactly which schools will remain. A request to the President from General Fleming, chief of FWA, could result in an executive order preserving *all* the WPA nursery schools and school lunches until the end of their fiscal year, June 30, 1943. The money is there for the purpose, and this would give enough time to make a smooth transfer to another agency.

Enough telephone calls on the subject went in to the general that he refused to take any more, but nothing very specific has happened at the present writing.

THERE are two paramount reasons why the federal government is just twitching from side to side instead of moving forward toward solving the child care problem. One is the apparent inability of those supposed to be concerned with children in Washington to concentrate on helping the children instead of helping themselves. Hence, no clear-cut over-all child care program has ever been presented by government departments to their coordinator. However, there are plenty of people in most cities and every state who know what a proper program is and how to carry it out. All they lack is money.

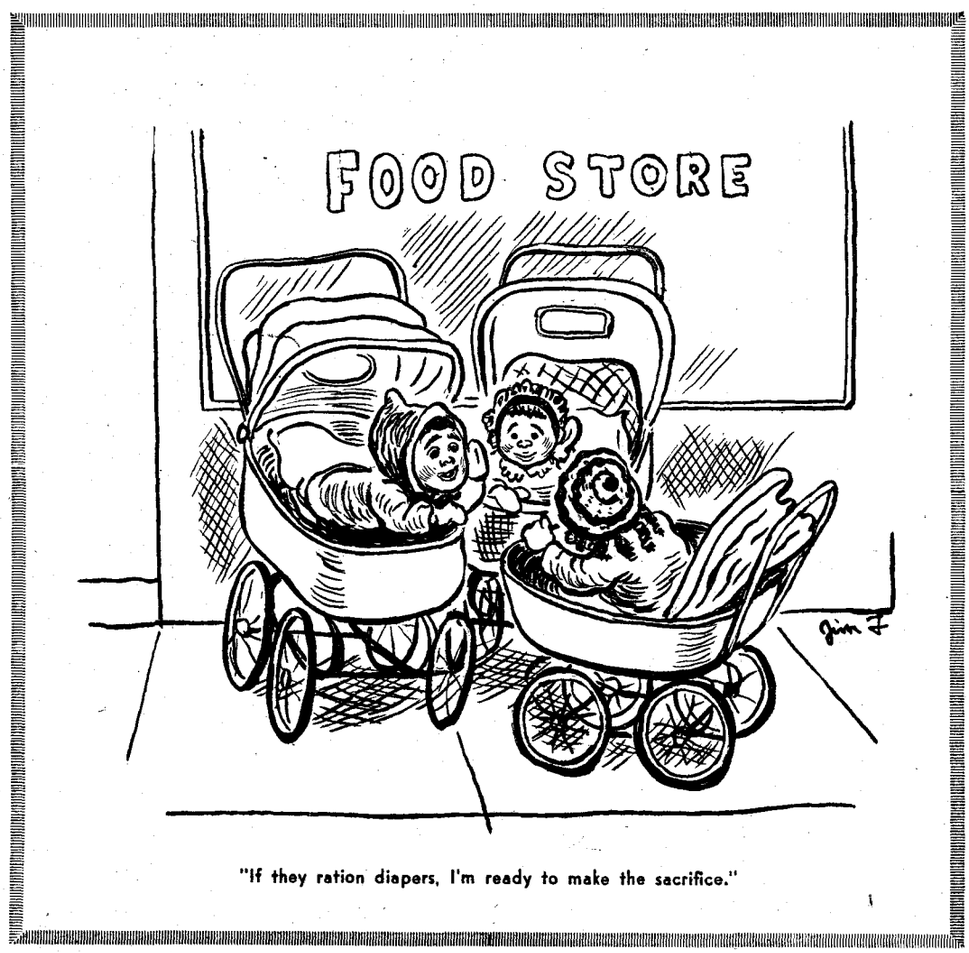
The main reason the government doesn't move forward on the most immediately important aspect of the child care program—care for the children of working mothers —is that it has been stumbling over the whole production problem. One aspect of solving that problem is to produce the manpower to reach peak production. And one of the most important methods of getting manpower is getting womanpower—which means to provide for sound child care.

Just as the War Manpower Commission has failed to face and solve problems of procurement of materials, failed soundly to plan and schedule the national production, it has failed to view the womanpower question squarely. On a federal level, the problem of child care is a problem for War Manpower. It's one of the simplest they have to solve. It is a question of dollars and cents, given to localities to be spent under the supervision of Boards of Education directly in schools, or to enlarge any useful existing facilities if school space is inadequate.

War Manpower must hear the demands of the women themselves. If the War Manpower Commission is sincere in wanting women in industry, it can cut through all this bickering and red tape in five minutes. The first thing it can do is see that Lanham Act funds are made readily available; the next, to see that all Labor-Management Committees help get action on local committees. The third step will be to see that a sufficient sum of money is appropriated by the next Congress to do a thorough job. Lanham act funds will provide a start. Many more millions will be needed.

All local citizens' committees must push War Manpower steadily to take these three steps. Where such groups do not exist, they must be formed; for until pressure comes from all over the country, little will be done on a broad scale for the children.

R. W. WILLIAMSON.



"If they ration diapers, I'm ready to make the sacrifice."

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BOOKS and PEOPLE by SAMUEL SILLEN

TRADITIONS: BIG AND LITTLE

The 1,850 writers represented in "Twentieth Century Authors" include the "Encyclopedists of the Twentieth Century." But the voices of "doubt, despair, muddle and malice" are there too.

APPROPRIATELY dedicated to the memory of Eugene Petrov, who died in the defense of Sevastopol, *Twentieth Century Authors* (H. W. Wilson Co., $8.50) is by far the most useful and extensive biographical dictionary of modern literature now available. After four years of preparation, Stanley J. Kunitz and Howard Haycraft have edited a volume of 1,577 double-column pages which supersedes their own well thumbed *Living Authors* and *Authors Today and Yesterday*. They have included over 1,850 figures. Every author who could be reached was invited to write his own sketch, so that many of the portraits have the added interest of autobiographical studies. Representation of non-American authors, particularly those of the Soviet Union, is more adequate than in previous biographical dictionaries. If there are serious omissions, these are all the more striking in view of the book's excellent coverage.

Leafing through the volume, one is again reminded of the smashing impact that the fight against fascism has had on writers' lives. It is impossible to write a coherent literary history of the past ten years in any other terms. The literary fight against fascism did not begin with the war, as so many critics who once opposed anti-fascist writing as "propaganda" seem determined to believe. We have had great prophetic spirits among us for many years, Encyclopedists of the Twentieth Century fighting like Diderot and Voltaire for humanity, but against an even more formidable and hideous enemy.

Here is Henri Barbusse organizing in 1932 the first World Congress against War and Fascism and speaking soon after in New York, rallying us against the Nazis who had just come to power. Here are Maxim Gorky and Romain Rolland in Moscow, 1935, renewing their old friendship, working out a program for the literary offensive: Gorky, poisoned in 1936 by Nazi-hired Trotskyites; Rolland, "present whereabouts and state of health, following the fall of France, unknown." And here is Martin Anderson Nexo, soldier of freedom—whose proletarian epic *Pelle the Conqueror* Randolph Bourne rightly considered "one of the great novels of the world"—a prisoner since 1940 in a Nazi concentration camp near his native Copenhagen.

Spain! Ralph Winston Fox, brilliant Anglo-Canadian novelist, critic, political writer, killed in action. And Christopher St. John Sprigg (Christopher Caudwell), a Communist like Fox, at thirty the supremely gifted author of works on physics, aviation, esthetics, killed in action. And Federico Garcia Lorca, beautiful voice of his people, murdered in cold blood by Franco.

This war against vandalism has a great literary tradition behind it. And it is in the spirit of this tradition that Friedrich Wolf and Jean Richard Bloch broadcast to their own peoples over the Moscow radio; that Anna Seghers, Ludwig Renn, Constancia de la Mora turn out fighting books and magazines in Mexico; that Lion Feuchtwanger, Bert Brecht, Heinrich and Thomas Mann send shafts of irony and indignation and hope from California; that Sholokhov, Kataev, Alexei Tolstoy, and Ilya Ehrenbourg write their impassioned accounts of fighting on the Soviet front.

But in turning these pages of a biographical dictionary, one is also reminded that another literary tradition leading to surrender and degradation is by no means dead, however decadent it may be. Knut Hamsun gave his "blessings" to the Nazis almost the day they reached Oslo. In January 1941 Ezra Pound began broadcasting fascist propaganda by short wave from Rome to America. Louis Ferdinand Celine, vicious enemy of the Soviet Union, author of the brutalized *Journey to the End of Night,* has won favor with the Nazis in Paris because of his anti-Semitic and anti-Communist ravings, just as he won favor with Leon Trotsky, who recognized in him "the genuine wealth of French culture." And there is Henry Miller, author of the pornographic *The Cosmological Eye,* darling of the Trotskyite intelligentsia, who writes: "I want to be read by fewer and fewer

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people. . . . I hope and believe that the whole civilized world will be wiped out in the next hundred years or so." The whole civilized world, in refusing his second wish, will gladly grant him his first.

FAR from dead, this tradition is beginning to assert itself with a vehemence which we must recognize and fight. If one turns from the biographical dictionary to current books and periodicals, one is impressed with the fact that in the past few months the literary defeatists, like the political defeatists, who were temporarily under cover, are crawling over the public forum. The tactic has changed over the years, but the enemies of Barbusse and Gorky have retained their basic position.

The specimens are numerous and appalling. Here, for instance, is Stephen Spender's new collection of verse, *Ruins and Visions*. In the foreword to this book, Spender notes the fact that he has a section of poems on Spain. He reminds his readers that he favored the republican side. Why, then, he asks, do I avoid the "heroic" note? Because a poet must be true to his experiences, and I, Stephen Spender, did not experience heroism. There are too many "external pressures" on the poet in this war, as in Spain. Therefore "in my most recent poems I have deliberately turned back to a kind of writing which is more personal and have included within my subjects weakness and fantasy and illusion."

If you should argue with Spender that this enervated conception of poetry is going to produce the opposite of anti-fascist verse, then Allen Tate will jump up to say that the best anti-fascist verse may be pro-Axis verse. But literally. Mr. Tate, whose volume *Reactionary Essays* was not ineptly titled, was invited by Joy Davidman recently to contribute to the anthology of United Nations verse which she is preparing. Mr. Tate went crying to the *New Republic:* "If we are going to justify the great cause for which we are presumably fighting, we shall have to confess that some verse, which even seems to favor the immediate cause of the Axis, is poetry, and anti-Axis in the deepest sense." If Mr. Tate could, if only in imagination, overcome the idea that we are "presumably" fighting for a great cause, he might have to confess that he is talking the most dangerous nonsense. One does not envy him rummaging through the libraries of the world that remain intact looking for an anti-fascist pro-Axis poem, let alone a good one.

A few weeks ago George Seldes wrote the *New Republic* editors that "No statement as vicious and untrue as Ignazio Silone's 'Fascism is also a type of socialism' has ever before appeared in the columns of the *New Republic,* at least not in the twenty years in which I have read it every week." That may be true. But I can produce a statement by a *New Republic* editor, Alfred Kazin, that is just as vicious and just as untrue. In his *On Native Grounds,* Kazin has the effrontery, the utterly brazen and outrageous stupidity to equate "Pound in the arms of Mussolini" with "Barbusse in the arms of Stalin." I refrain from other examples in the interest of leaving ample swinging space for Isidor Schneider's forthcoming NEW MASSES review of this tedious tissue of puerile slurs.

The war as a "threat" to honest literature: that is the theme of recent articles on poetry and war by Babette Deutsch and T. S. Eliot. Mr. Eliot, who once described himself as a royalist in politics, has made a very generous concession to the spirit of the times, but he takes back with the right hand what he gives with the left. "I should say," he should-says, "that while a poet, as a man, should be no less devoted to his country than other men, I distinguish between his duty as a man and his duty as a poet." It is precisely this "distinction" that Ralph Fox and Christopher Caudwell opposed. For it is, as Eliot's article makes abundantly clear, a demoralizing distinction which can be observed only at the peril of both "the man" and "the poet." Eliot argues that you cannot understand a war while you are in it, and this must seem overwhelmingly true if you really don't understand it. But for the Russian poet Constantine Simonov and the anti-fascist German poet Bert Brecht the meaning of this war, even "the kind of understanding needed for writing poetry," is not disturbingly obscure, and they are certainly not possessed of that sublime patience which will enable them to wait till "the experience has become a part of a man's whole past." Mr. Eliot *qua* man seems to be for something, though with a conspicuous lack of manly enthusiasm; and Mr. Eliot *qua* poet seems to be against something. So what are we supposed to do while this interesting little drama gets itself worked up to a schizophrenic climax?

WE ARE supposed, says Miss Deutsch, to write long, lugubrious articles explaining that if, as Wilfrid Owen wrote in the last war, "the true Poets must be truthful," then today "This may mean that they cannot write about the war." Here again is the note of defeatism in literary terms. Using super-revolutionary language to express reactionary ideas, Miss Deutsch tells the poets that they are "soldiers of the revolution" even though "Some misguided revolutionists [who, which, what and where?] are fighting on the wrong side." Let the poet look to his weapons, she warns. This means that he must not speak "when he has nothing to say or when he is so pained or puzzled that he must speak inadequately." This is of course true. But why all this emphasis on silence rather than on speech? Why these quotations from W. H. Auden ("language may be useless, for No words men write can stop the war. . . .") and Yeats ("I think it better that in times like these A poet's mouth be silent. . . .")?

These negative moods are as serious obstacles to the growth of a vigorous anti-fascist literature as they are to the development of all-out effort in other areas. In literature they stem from various sources. From ivory tower isolationism which has changed its terminology but not its basic temper. From undercurrents of anti-Soviet bias. From pacifist tremblings of spirits not sufficiently brave to face the reality of this war. From the Trotskyite virus which is more active in literary circles than elsewhere. And the results are frequently so loathsome that they hardly bear repetition: John Chamberlain's insult to the intelligence and his perversion of history when he equates the Nazis with the Jacobins; Burton Rascoe's diatribe against German refugee authors.

I HAVE strayed from the biographical dictionary. But there is point in doing so. The point is that the conflicting traditions reflected in these 1,850 lives are still in conflict. There is the sturdy anti-fascist tradition of Barbusse, Gorky, and Nexo. And there is the tradition of doubt, despair, muddle, and malice. We have more allies on our side today, many more. But in some circles resistance to a fighting anti-fascist literature is actually growing more vocal. We shall have to devote much more energy and thought to overcoming this resistance than we might have supposed, six months ago, to be necessary.

It Comes from Goebbels

NEWS IS A WEAPON, *by Matthew Gordon. Introduction by Elmer Davis. Knopf. $2.50.*

THIS book should be required reading for every American newspaper publisher and editor, every cable desk man, every radio newscaster, "military expert," columnist, and foreign correspondent. The more patriotic of them would then undoubtedly take immediate steps to keep their newspapers and broadcasts from continuing to circulate "news" inspired by the Goebbels propaganda machine.

Former news editor of the Columbia Broadcasting System and now chief of the Foreign Service Division of the Office of War Information, Matthew Gordon reveals with startling and convincing detail how the Axis makes news a weapon in its war against the United Nations. This "news arm" of the Hitler war machine is of course thoroughly coordinated with its military arm, its diplomatic arm, its economic and industrial arm. With Goebbels in Berlin as the center of the spider web of this news-as-propaganda, the enemy plans exactly what rumors, half-truths, wholelies, occasional "facts" and speculations it wants to transmit to the people of the United Nations—both through the Axis short-wave broadcasts and through the more effective normal news channels of the United Nations themselves. And the fact is that, with the exception of the Soviet Union, every one of the United Nations complies by putting its news services at Goebbels' disposal.

Mr. Gordon demonstrates in detail that the Associated Press, United Press, International News Service, and their radio counterparts are in effect the most far-reaching agencies of Nazi propaganda in the United States. Daily 40,000,000 readers and additional millions of listeners are exposed to the headlines and news dispatches wired in by these vast news gathering organ-

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isms. With careful attention to the *mores* of American journalism, Goebbels adapts the forms of his handouts to American tradition and taste. Knowing the deadline mentality of our commercial press, with its passion for speed above all else, including accuracy and reliability, Goebbels will excite our enterprising AP, UP, and INS men stationed in leading cities of the occupied countries, and in "neutral" news centers like Ankara, Stockholm, and Berne, to outdo each other transmitting what *Goebbels wants*. As Elmer Davis notes in his introduction: "this competitive zeal has been shrewdly used by our enemies to feed us just the kind of news they want us to hear." Goebbels does more: knowing the ill-repute in which he is held by our people, he writes his releases so as to cover up his direct control and authorship, and the AP, UP, and INS send them to us as *he* plans them. So we constantly get dispatches referring to "exceptionally well informed sources," "authoritative sources," "sources close to the High Command," and so on, each one creating two impressions the Nazis wish to peddle: that there are "independent" news sources in the Axis countries, and that our newsmen have a free hand to ferret out news from other than official sources.

The objective of the Axis news arm is, of course, to confuse us, disorient us with reference to our Allies, alarm us, disunify us at home, and undermine our intelligence and morale. Moreover, while seeking to demoralize us by their news dispatches, they use the fact that our press publishes their controlled propaganda to lift the morale of their own oppressed people by broadcasting to them such statements as the following: "The fact that all New York papers publish the German reports on their front pages testifies to the strong impression which the reports of the German High Command have caused in the USA."

To document his thesis, Mr. Gordon describes several typical Nazi news battles: "The News Battle for Britain," "The News Battle for Russia," "The News Attack for Pearl Harbor," and "The News Battle for the 'Second Front.'" Each of these accounts is very valuable; the last is the most instructive because the invasion of Europe is still the major military task of the United Nations. The Nazi news attack to prevent the opening of a Western Front began on June 22, 1941: "When the day of attack came, the Nazi news arm immediately began to employ all its tricks. Had the British believed that the German army was so heavily tied up in Russia that it couldn't successfully fight off other assaults, the thing to do from the Nazi viewpoint was to convince the British that this was not so and that the Nazis had plenty of forces available to deal with anything that might turn up."

In October 1941 the Nazis were still at it: "One line was to taunt the British. They presented the attitude that any British action was doomed since the Russians were licked.

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Typical of this line was a statement by a German short-wave broadcaster: 'What is the British army doing? We must ask Britain's present leaders—what about facing another Dunkirk on the Continent? It is up to them.'"

Early in 1942 "They put out the story that an attempt to open the 'second front' would not work and there was no use trying. They tried to get across the point that the British were doing very well with their air offensive; why not let it go at that?"

Later: "Toward the end of April 1942 the Axis hit these lines: First, Britain and the United States simply couldn't invade the Continent because Axis sea warfare had 'crippled' the Allies' navies and merchant fleets. Second, any invasion attempt would only be a 'total failure' because the Axis was ready for it." In August: "Through 'neutral' correspondents in Berlin, the Nazis put out stories of extensive maneuvers on the western front. There were accounts of wonderful fortifications, strong, well planned, impregnable." Remember them? And do you remember how every one of these Nazi-supplied arguments became the substance of extended public debate in this country?

What should be done about the service rendered the Axis by our news agencies and press is an urgent problem. Neither Matthew Gordon nor Elmer Davis offers too clear a program. Davis hopes that reading this book will "make each of us his own news warden." But each of us is not his own air warden, food warden, or soldier of battle or production. Therefore, to leave it up to each citizen to exercise his active disbelief in anything emanating from enemy sources is dangerous. Gordon says the "great responsibility lies with the editors of all our news media." True, but do any of the newspaper editors (except those of the *Daily Worker*) follow a policy of rejecting out of hand all Axis "news" until it is corroborated by independent and authentic sources? The New York *Times* attitude toward Axis news is exemplified by the headline it wrote for Hanson W. Baldwin's article of Dec. 3, 1942: "Variance Between Soviet and Nazi Claims Heightens Mystery of 'Unknown' Conflict." Not merely does Baldwin attach credence to the Nazi communique, planted though it is by Goebbels, but he uses it to cast doubt upon the Soviet communique!

In insisting on the publication of this Axis propaganda, some press lords act as if the press had *inalienable* rights. But only the people's rights are inalienable. Our government will be discharging its responsibility to our people at war in a people's war when it begins to prosecute the Coughlins, the McCormicks, Pattersons, and Hearsts, and to take administrative steps to prevent the news-gathering agencies from flooding the nation hourly with Axis propaganda. When the administration takes the necessary steps to help the people understand the menace, it need have no fear that America will fail to support drastic action in the news war against the Axis.

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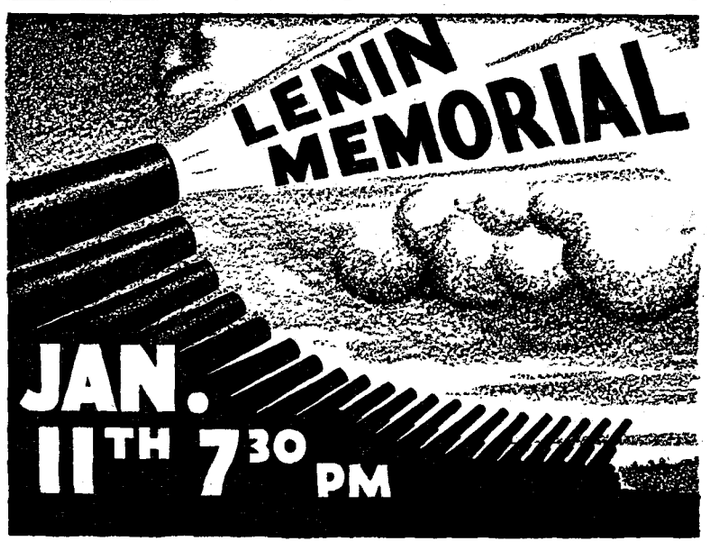

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SIGHTS and SOUNDS

SIMONOV: SOLDIERS' POET

The life and work of the twenty-seven-year-old Soviet war correspondent whose play "The Russian People" opened this week on Broadway. "If you think of death, think of the death of the enemy. For the brave there is no death. . . ." By H. W. L. Dana.

CONSTANTINE SIMONOV, whose play *The Russian People* is now being acted by a hundred theaters in the Soviet Union and by the Theater Guild in America, holds a unique position in the world today. As a war correspondent for *Red Star,* the Red Army newspaper, his dispatches from various points along the front, from Odessa, from Murmansk, from Stalingrad, have given the Russian people a tremendous picture in prose of the heroic struggle against Nazi invasion. At the same time he has found that poetry, too, plays an important part in the Soviet Union today in strengthening both civilian and military morale. The war in Russia has somehow, as he puts it, "made men's feelings keener, purer, stronger, more responsive to art and poetry."

Wherever he went along the 1,800 mile front, Red Army men begged him to recite his verses to them, in the mud of dugouts, in artillery observation posts, in forests and fields, reclining, seated, standing, everywhere and anywhere, under all conceivable circumstances —and each time the men in uniform clamored for more.

Some of Simonov's poems were titled "From a Frontline Notebook." One of the shortest of these is called "Glory." It gives an account of the death of a soldier, whose very dying seems to give life to the others. It may be translated as follows:

His soldier's coat five minutes later
Is covered up by falling snow.
Exhausted hands outstretched before him,
He lies upon the ground below.

He lies there dead. And no one knows him.
But we go forward on our way.
The glory of the dead is giving
New wings to those who join the fray.

We have in us a solemn freedom,
Despite our anguished mother's cry,
The deathlessness of our great people
At cost of our own death to buy.

Another group of Simonov's poems was called "Frontline Ballads." The last of these, "The Secret of Victory," tells the story of a Soviet flier who has managed to bring down three German bombers single-handed. In the conflict his own plane crashes and he is badly hurt. As soon as possible, however, he insists on flying again, saying:

If you think of death, think of the death of the enemy.
For the brave, there is no death, only immortality.
If you do not wish to die, be brave! This is the secret of victory.

His poems have not been about military valor only. On the contrary, the verses most beloved by the soldiers seemed to be the simple ones which Simonov has written about his own home, his mother, his wife, his child. He found that the Red Army men shared his feelings about being parted from dear ones, his sadness, and his faith that they would meet again. As he said of his fellow Russians: "It is because we love our homes and our own people so much that we fight so stubbornly against an enemy that would deprive us of our happiness."

THROUGHOUT the war, Simonov tells us, he has written no letters; but he composed what he calls "unmailed verses" to the woman he loves, his wife. These lyrics he has gathered together under the title "With You and Without You." The first section, called "Before June," is made up of poems written while he was with her on the eve of the Nazi invasion. The later sections were written during the war, when he was fighting on the various fronts. These groups of poems are called "In the West," "In the South," "In the North." They are filled with a spirit of love and longing for home and they seem to have had a strong appeal to the Red Army men who heard him recite them. Simonov writes: "I came to understand that the soldiers' hearts cried for poetry, the poetry of love and affection. . . . I learned, most unexpectedly, that men in action everywhere wanted to hear poetry, and specifically and especially verses of love."

The particular favorite of the soldiers was the short poem called "Wait for Me." This was written while Simonov was on the western front, at the beginning of the terrific Nazi invasion, and may be translated as follows:

Leon Ames, Randolph Echols, and Victor Varconi in a scene from Constantine Simonov's "The Russian People," produced in this country by the Theater Guild. The play opened at the Guild Theater, New York City, on December 29.

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Wait for me and I'll return.
Wait through thick and thin . . .
Wait if sorrow makes you yearn
When dreary rains begin,
Wait when winter whirls the snow,
Wait when days grow hot,
Wait when others tired grow
And remember not.
Wait when from far distant places
Letters do not come.
Wait when all with saddened faces
Grimly sit at home.

Wait for me and I'll return.
Only feel regret
For the others who can learn
Quickly to forget.
Let my mother and son believe
I at last have died.
Let my friends and neighbors grieve
By the fire side.
When they drink their bitter wine
To my memory . . .
Wait. That drink you will decline
Still awaiting me.

Wait for me and I'll return.
Death itself to spite.
Let them say with unconcern:
"That was luck all right!"
Those not waiting cannot know
How through battle's gloom
You by waiting for me so
Saved me from my doom.
Only you and I know best
I survived my fate
Just because, unlike the rest,
You knew how to wait.

At times, in the trenches, when Simonov came upon Russian soldiers who were feeling lonely and depressed, he would recite this poem to them. Often they would write down the words by a flashlight or a kerosene lamp. Later the poem was printed in a newspaper and soldiers would cut it out and send it to their wives and sweethearts.

Already eighteen composers have set these verses to music. Simonov found that the thought of someone waiting for them at home was a source of moral strength for hundreds of thousands of men at the front.

The widespread response to this poem led Simonov to give the same title, *Wait for Me,* to a film scenario and a play to be acted in the Moscow Dramatic Theater. The play tells the story of a squadron leader in the Russian Air Force who finds himself in the rear of the enemy, cut off from the rest of the Red Army. He fights with the guerrillas behind the lines and ultimately makes his way home, where everyone had thought him killed—everyone, that is, except his wife, who had gone on waiting, still believing that he was alive.

A similar theme, the bond of sympathy and confidence, of willingness to wait beyond all hope, is to be found in Simonov's other plays. In *A Fellow from Our Town,* which early in 1942 was awarded the first Stalin Prize in Playwriting of 100,000 rubles, Simonov portrays the beautiful understanding between the young soldier Sergei Lukonin and the actress that he loves. And in *The Russian People,* where some of the same characters are introduced, there is a fine relationship of love and trust between Captain Safonov and Valya, the young girl whom he loves and yet sends on a dangerous mission behind the German lines. In one scene soldiers show each other photographs of their sweethearts and realize how much they are encouraged by the thought of someone waiting for them. One of the characters is a poet whose poems are read to the soldiers. Another goes singing to his death, saying: "For courage, give me a song!"

These plays were written in snatches during brief stopovers at Moscow. With his activities as war correspondent, dispatch carrier, and often as active soldier and officer, not to mention his writing of poems, Simonov has had little time to devote to playwriting. He has had to dictate his plays at white heat with little chance to rewrite them. That is why his plays seem so spontaneous, so full of reality, and yet so shot through with the same delicate feeling which is to be found in his poems. Where else can one find today so remarkable an instance of a young lyric poet playing so important a part in war, or of soldiers so enthusiastic about lyric poems.

H. W. L. Dana.

LITTLE MARGARET'S JOURNEY

A film study in civilian morale. . . . And a new Soviet movie, "Fortress on the Volga."

An unmistakably great American war film has just appeared. No fanfares announced *Journey for Margaret;* the newspapers gave it comparatively little attention, the lobby on opening night was not filled with critics knocking their foreheads against the floor. But it should have been. *Journey for Margaret* is so honest that it makes *Mrs. Miniver* look like a *Ladies' Home Journal* novelette. It is one of the first completely adult handlings of the reality of war—not the war of spectacular airplane shots and fireworks, not the war of leering spies and brave girls who foil them single-handed, but the war of men and women and children. Especially children.

The underlying theme of *Journey for Margaret* is civilian morale. Each of its leading figures is a shock case. The American newspaperman, an idealist, has seen the betrayal of the loyalists, the equal betrayal of Munich, the disintegration of France. Once able to fight passionately against the Axis, he has slowly grown numb. All raids and sudden death cannot rouse him; he goes through the motions, but nothing seems particularly worth fighting for or getting angry about. His wife retains her own fighting spirit, and deplores his numbness—until, wounded in an air raid, she loses the child she is carrying and the hope of others. She escapes from this into a brittle, emotionless gayety. And the children, whose parents have died before their eyes, are overwhelmed with a sense of their terrifying helplessness. Some can only scream; some sink into apathy; some spend their days wiping away tears, clinging desperately to some link with past safety—a woolly lamb or an empty incendiary bomb. In a home run by a German refugee, the children are coaxed back to life. And the task of making a livable world for the children becomes the stimulus which brings the newspaperman and his wife back to life and courage.

The details of the film are admirably handled. Sincere performances by Robert Young, Laraine Day, and Fay Bainter set off the astonishing work of the small children, particularly Billy Severen and Margaret O'Brien, who play the victims of the London blitz. There is nothing of the "screen child" about them; no false cuteness, no precocious leer. For very nearly the first time on our screen, five-year-olds are presented as real people instead of pert trained monkeys.

Minor elements provide an intelligent factual background for the story, which takes place in London shortly before Pearl Harbor; a smiling, polite Japanese diplomat, in a regretful hurry to get back to Tokyo by early December, provides all the time values the film needs. At the end the newspaperman, with his two adopted children, reaches New York Harbor in time to see the skyscrapers blacked out; and to promise the children that the lights will go on again, all over the world. It is here that the greatness of *Journey for Margaret* is emphasized. It is great not only because it treats its characters as real people, but because it treats the audience as real people too. Soberly and straightforwardly, *Journey for Margaret* presents a responsibility and puts it up to us.

It is pleasant to be able to compare this Hollywood film with *Fortress on the Volga,* and find that each sets off the excellence of the other. *Journey for Margaret* makes you cry by presenting, one after another, the tortured and crying children. *Fortress on the Volga* makes you cry with a goldenrod flower and a sweep of sky and a song. Each way is great.

Many of us, somewhat conscious of our own inadequacy to the subject, have been trying to write poems on the defense of Stalingrad. Some of us have brought power and grace to the job, others only good will, but all have done what we could. The Russians themselves, however, in *Fortress on the Volga* have produced the best poem of all. This film is the story of how, once before, Stalingrad beat back the Germans and their jackals; how, not so many years ago, Stalin held the city until Voroshilov could come up, and in doing so prevented the Kaiser's armies

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from surrounding the heart of Russia and starving it to death.

This was in 1918, with the Germans overrunning the Ukraine, seconded by the White Guards and by traitors within the Soviet city. Stalingrad was called Tsaritsin then; it was a smaller and a weaker city, and although it had large munition factories, its main importance was strategic. Taking it would have enabled the White and German armies of the Don to join those of the Urals, closing the last gap through which Moscow and the cities to the north could be supplied with grain. It had few defenders, scant equipment, many enemies. But it was not taken.

Fortress on the Volga must have been produced and exhibited at the very height of the new battle for Stalingrad. It is a superb example of the real function of the war film; you come out of it with your "heart stirred as with a trumpet," as Sidney said of an old ballad similarly heroic. It is the best of morale-builders, and it is also a masterpiece. Should anyone still doubt that the screen can educate, inspirit, and entertain at the same time, *Fortress on the Volga* will finish him.

Stalin holds the city while Voroshilov's army fights its way through to join him. That is the main theme; and in its elaboration there are gorgeous comedy, brilliant satire, as well as quiet heroism and the trumpet call. On the one hand we see the city's pretentious night-club, where the secret Whites meet. A somewhat tarnished songbird, with ostrich plumes absurdly swaying in her hair, kicks her silk legs on the table top, while a beglamoured schoolboy gapes in childish delight. At the doorway of the private room stands a White officer, torn between his interest in the anti-Soviet plot and his interest in the lady's legs.

And on the other hand; three peasants ask Stalin to give them back the confiscated grain of their hungry village. One is a hot-tempered youth; one a humorous old man; there is genuine laughter in the scene. There is more than laughter. The old man, weeping, embraces Stalin's knees, speaking of the starving and the dead in his village. He is quickly set on his feet and shown Lenin's telegram imploring that wheat be sent to starving Moscow. He cocks his head on one side, spells out the words. "Lenin begs for bread?" he says wonderingly. "In that case . . . come on, muzhiks!" And the peasants trot off cheerfully without another word.

Gelovani's portrayal of Stalin is remarkable for its dignity and power; but also for the light touch. Still comparatively unknown, the young Stalin enters Tsaritsin unrecognized; exchanges wisecracks with the workers' deputation gathered to greet him; joins their march and solemnly helps them carry the banner of welcome toward the train he's supposed to be on. The cheerful gayety with which the film opens, however, gradually changes and intensifies until the final moment of exaltation is reached. Voroshilov's men win their battle and ride on, singing what must be one of the most beautiful love songs in the world. Stalin stands on a hilltop, overlooking the city, waiting for the relieving army. The camera pulls back until his figu stands out in the distance against the sk and in the distance Voroshilov leaps from h horse and runs up the hill to meet him.

SUCH moments illustrate an essential diffe ence in approach between a great Sovi film and a great American one. Our be directors use the camera as if they were wri ing an honest and efficient prose narrativ often a very powerful one; but Soviet directo use the camera as if they were writing poetr More exactly, the tradition of our film is tradition of naturalism. Painstaking realis of detail, circumstantial reporting, suggestir very little and saying everything explicitl provide the particular excellences of mai Hollywood films as well as, in less skillfi hands, their conspicuous defects. There is r lack of reality in the Soviet film, especiall in characterization, in which it often su passes ours. In addition to naturalism, how ever, there is the lyric touch; the use of ur derstatement and suggestion; the suppressio of many circumstances of a scene in order t produce a single strong emotional effect, whic give Soviet films their extraordinary inter sity of feeling. For instance, the battle be tween Voroshilov's army and the White force is not shown in detail at all. There are plume of goldenrod swaying on a hillside, and be yond them a line of galloping cavalry. Ther are the massed German battalions advancing the Russians fixing bayonets; and then, on th crest of a hill above the grouped enemy soi diers, appears the first wave of the Russia cavalry charge. With almost no transition ex cept a significant change in the music, th battle is over and the dead are carried away All of this—sweep of the camera, movemen of marching men, insistent beat of the musi —has the vast rhythm of a swirl of storm clouds in the sky. These battle scenes follow to some extent, the pattern of *Alexande Nevsky;* and they demonstrate that an em phasis on epic heroism need not be confinec to films of the thirteenth century. There is just as much poetry in the twentieth.

JOY DAVIDMAN.

Chekhov Revival

Katharine Cornell's production of "The Three Sisters."

IT IS argued that Chekhov's *Three Sisters* is a masterpiece of dramatic art, and its champions make out a good case for it. Whatever Chekhov's shortcomings as a dramatist (and he broke every rule in the book), he was a master of characterization. The *Three Sisters* is full of weird and interesting and very human people, and the interplay of their moods, tempers, tantrums, and dumps can provide entertainment and enlightenment in the theater.

The key to the play is the frustration and bankruptcy of the czarist middle class. Olga, hating the profession of teaching, was fated to become a headmistress in a Rus-

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ian provincial town. Masha, married to the nsufferable pedagogue Kuligin, fell vio-ently in love with Colonel Vershinin, only o lose him. Irina, the youngest, consented to narry a man she did not love; then lost aim in a duel. Their brother, Andrey, dream-ing of a professorship in Moscow University, remained nothing more than the husband of a vulgar shrew and a member of the local council, or *zemstvo*. All three girls pined away for Moscow, city of their birth and their dreams. Pensioners of a military father who had died long ago, the word Moscow and its connotations was the symbol of their dreams and the obverse side of their complete frustration as human beings.

The trouble with them all was that they were socially useless, even though the three sisters struggled against the boredom and corruption that enveloped them. Olga taught school, but hated it. Irina worked first in the telegraph office, then at the district coun-cil, hated it, wanted a husband, couldn't fall in love, lost her unloved betrothed. And Chekhov, speaking through the mouth of the baron (who died in the duel), puts the finger on them all when he says "The time is at hand, an avalanche is moving down upon us, a mighty clearing storm which is coming, is already near and will soon blow the laziness, the indifference, the distaste for work, the rotten boredom out of our so-ciety. I shall work, and in another twenty-five or thirty years everyone will have to work. Every one!"

He was wrong by only eight years; the storm came sooner than he had anticipated. For the October Revolution destroyed the existence of the Prozorov sisters and the parasitic military gentry who surrounded them. For the boredom of the decaying society it substituted the energy of the new socialist regime, and it exploded the myth of the "Russian soul," so given to *Nichevo,* vodka, sordid love affairs, melancholy, and suicide.

The profundity of *The Three Sisters* lies in its evocation of this pre-Revolutionary mood of the Russian upper middle class. The mood is evoked through the characters; their in-sufferable ennui, their tragi-comic frittering away of their time; their petty interests. As drama the play is internal, rather than ex-ternal—what goes on, goes on inside the characters, not in the form of action on the stage. And since Chekhov cared practically nothing for plot and relied almost entirely on characterization, he demands, for effective performance, a cast of real actors who un-derstand what he is saying.

I did not feel that Miss Cornell's star-spangled cast succeeded in breathing life into the play. (The moods of these characters, if they are not shrewdly and profoundly projected, will evoke laughter and once or twice they did exactly that.) The actors were having such a whale of a time playing Chek-hov that the play was lost in the posturing and in what the performers must have felt was Russian gloominess. There was no fusion, no unity, no real understanding, and the whole thing failed to convince me, except for rare moments.

Edmund Gwenn, as the drunken Army doctor, Chebutykin, was very affecting; touch-ing as a human being. McKay Morris, as the sarcastic Captain Solyony, surprisingly in-jected more passion into his role than almost any of the more glamorous names like Cor-nell, Dennis King, Alexander Knox, Tom Powers, or Ruth Gordon. (Miss Gordon played Natasha, Andrey's wife, for a clown —the most strident piece of bad acting of the season.) And Judith Anderson, who once gave us a memorable Lady Macbeth and has real passion and stature on the stage, was hopelessly lost as the schoolmarm, Olga.

Stanislavsky said (and it is quoted in the program notes), "But take him (Chekhov) whose art soars, and you will feel in the everyday plots of his plays the eternal long-ings of man for happiness, his strivings up-wards, the true aroma of Russian poetry." The Cornell production of *The Three Sisters* was read, as Stanislavsky put it, "in the kitchen of life," where "you will find nothing in him but the simplest plot, mosquitoes, crickets, boredom, gray little people."

So far from soaring, art fell flat on its face in this production, despite Mr. McClin-tic's strenuous efforts, plus shrewd costum-ing, lighting, sets. It was a pity.

ALVAH BESSIE.

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